

**NATIONALISM WITH CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS: XI JINPING'S  
NATIONALIST AGENDA IN THREE CASES**

by  
Sara Marie Johnson

A thesis submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts in Government

Baltimore, Maryland  
May 2021

© 2021 Sara Johnson  
All rights reserved

# Abstract

Since Xi Jinping's tenure as General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) began in 2012, nationalism is a topic often discussed by scholars analyzing China's behavior. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, China's prodigious economic growth, antagonistic political environment, and restrictive social policies have only added to its mystique. How can a nation encumbered with the societal difficulties of a Third World nation, restricted by a quasi-authoritarian Communist government, and largely feared by the international community unite to achieve monumental growth in economic development and political influence? The ultimate architect of China's perpetual rise in the twenty-first century is the nationalist narrative perpetuated by the CCP under Xi Jinping's leadership. Xi Jinping's careful consolidation of political power coincides with the fortification of a modern, state-centered constructivist nationalist agenda.

This thesis attempts to advance our understanding of Chinese nationalism in the Xi Jinping-era. China's remarkable economic prosperity and its growing political influence within the international community will likely persist through the near future. Therefore, it is essential that scholars understand the cultural, historical, and political factors that influence the development of the distinct Chinese nationalism that drives development. If scholars can view China's actions through the lens of Chinese—not Western—conceptions of nationalism, then the international community will be better equipped to approach China's current policies with a culturally sensitive, pragmatic understanding vice perennial apprehension.

The second contribution of this thesis is an analysis of topics often discussed regarding contemporary China. China's present policies toward Muslim minorities, domestic corruption,

and environmentalism are titular initiatives of Xi Jinping's administration and are widely criticized by the international community. Evaluating these issues through the outlook of contemporary Chinese nationalism will facilitate a greater understanding of these topics and their potential impact on the world order.

**Primary Reader and Advisor:** Dr. Benjamin Ginsberg

**Secondary Reader:** Dr. Alexander Rosenthal

# Contents

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Literature Review</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3 Coercive National Unity: Nationalism and Muslim Minority Rights in India and China</b>	<b>35</b>
3.1 Theories of Nationalism . . . . .	36
3.2 Legal Applications of Secularism and Communal Identity . . . . .	46
3.3 Political Crises of Muslim Minorities in Kashmir and Xinjiang . . . . .	57
<b>4 Destabilizing the China Dream: Nationalism and Domestic Corruption in China</b>	<b>66</b>
4.1 Corruption Studies and Metrics . . . . .	67
4.2 Historic Sources of Corruption in Chinese Society . . . . .	70
4.3 Xi Jinping's Anticorruption Reforms . . . . .	73
4.4 Xi Jinping's Nationalist Ideology . . . . .	79
<b>5 Building an Ecological Civilization: Environmental Civil Society in China</b>	<b>87</b>
5.1 Civil Society and Environmentalism in China . . . . .	89
5.2 Environmental Civil Society and the CCP . . . . .	95
5.3 Environmental Protests . . . . .	100
5.4 Xi Jinping's Environmental Agenda . . . . .	106
<b>6 Conclusion</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>119</b>

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

As the pre-eminent power in Asia and a rising power within the global community, the People's Republic of China (PRC) dominates global conversations on the Third World's rise within the international hierarchy. Since opening its doors to the West in 1978, China has pursued rapid modernization to support its prodigious economic growth and long-term hegemonic goals. As a result of these efforts, China transformed into a geopolitical power whose flourishing economy, shrinking civil society, rigid political structure, and, at times, polarizing international diplomacy ensures that the nation's quest for global preeminence will remain controversial. The prospect of a world order dictated by Chinese hegemony and widespread misconceptions on China's political goals feed the Western world's already robust anxieties of a China-centric future. Western governments must first understand China's political motivations, cultural specificities, and the underlying ethos of its quest for global supremacy. China's current political maneuverings are driven by a distinct Chinese nationalism, as articulated by the CCP under Xi Jinping. This nationalism determines the direction of China's political, economic, and social interactions domestically and internationally. To adequately assess China's current and future operations, especially as the rising global hegemon, a comprehensive understanding of the CCP's singular brand of nationalism is imperative.

Despite the modern origins of China's current interpretation of nationalism, nationalism studies are varied and abundant throughout academic literature. Contemporary analysis of

nationalism originates in the study of the specificities of nation-states and their citizens. Notably, Benedict Anderson's theory of an imagined community provides the cornerstone of contemporary theorizing of nationalism. Anderson claims that the modern nation-state emerged from an imagined political community that is both limited and sovereign.<sup>1</sup> This imagined community creates a national identity characterized by physical borders, political policies, and societal interactions. While an imagined community effects the development of national identity, interactions between the government and the population determine power dynamics. Thomas Hylland Eriksen summarizes that when social groups develop along similar cultures, a small group will invariably become the privileged class.<sup>2</sup> In addition to dictating societal interactions, the empowerment of the privileged class facilitates the transition of personal loyalties from cultural groups to the larger nation-state. Eriksen asserts that the predominance of the privileged class is fundamental to the development of the political and social hierarchy, which ultimately influences nation-states' operations. Ultimately, a precise understanding of nationalism requires a thorough awareness of nations and nation-states' physical and ideological origins.

Throughout nationalism studies, three broad schools of thought are predominate: primordialism, modernism, and state-centric constructivism. Primordialists like Anthony D. Smith maintain that ethnic affiliation or identity is the central influence in the development of nationalism.<sup>3</sup> Without a common ethnic identity, citizens cannot unite behind a singular nation-state or national identity. Modernists, notably Ernest Gellner, assert that nationalism is a

---

<sup>1</sup> Benedict Anderson, "Imagined Communities," In *Nations and Nationalism: A Reader*, edited by Spencer Philip and Wollman Howard. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005, 49.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hylland Eriksen, "Nationalism," In *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. London; New York, NY: Pluto Press, 2010, 126, accessed May 6, 2020, doi:10.2307/j.ctt183h0h1.12.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony D. Smith. "Culture, Community and Territory: The Politics of Ethnicity and Nationalism." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 72, no. 3 (1996): 446.

construct of the characteristics of modern life.<sup>4</sup> Industrialization, technological developments, mass migrations, and even global conflicts affect the development of nationalist identity.

Although Smith and Gellner both attribute ethnic identity as a contributing factor to the development of nationalist ideology, Gellner credits the specificities and traumas of modern life and its effects on society as more influential. While Smith and Gellner view nationalism as the byproduct of natural societal evolution, Eugen Weber espouses that nationalism is a specific product of the nation-state's designs. Weber's state-centric constructivist view maintains that nationalism is a fabrication of the nation-state and its political ambitions.<sup>5</sup> Rejecting the notion that nationalism originates from ethnicity or modernity, Weber instead emphasizes the nation-state's influence in shaping nationalist sentiment. While each is distinct, primordialism, modernism, and state-centric constructivism each provide useful interpretations of nationalism that policymakers still utilize today.

After analyzing these various theories of nationalism, policymakers can see direct evidence of their influence on China's nationalist narrative today. Since Xi Jinping's tenure began in 2012, China ardently espouses a modern and state-centric constructivist nationalist narrative. This narrative's primacy is possible due to the calculated empowerment of the CCP under Xi Jinping's leadership. To fully grasp the profound influence of nationalism on Chinese society, an acknowledgement of the profound influence of the CCP—the direct agent of this nationalist ethos and China's larger hegemonic aims—is imperative. While invariably influenced by domestic factors and the diversifying global world order, China's rapid economic development and its current political priorities are the designs of the CCP's power apparatus.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ernest Gellner, "Nationalisms and the New World Order," *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 47(5): 29.

<sup>5</sup> Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), 486.

Despite Deng Xiaoping's attempts to limit the formerly inseparable nature of Party-State operations, the current CCP reverts to nearly total control of political, social, and economic life. Party-State operations are once again indivisible. Under Xi Jinping's leadership, the CCP habitually affirms its overarching authority on Chinese society and Xi Jinping's primacy. Mao Zedong's famous quote, "Party, government, military, civilian, and academic; east, west, south, north, and center, the party leads everything" is often referenced by the state-run media or in the speeches of Xi Jinping.<sup>6</sup> In October 2017, the National Congress amended the CCP's institution codifying the Party's authority and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.<sup>7</sup> The communique also directed the CCP to "uphold and strengthen the overall leadership of the Party" and stipulated that unequivocal support for the Party and Xi Jinping is essential to "great success of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era."<sup>8</sup> The communique directed the "entire Party to uphold and strengthen the overall leadership of the Party" and ensure that China continues "working to secure a decisive victory in finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects."<sup>9</sup> The CCP continues to reaffirm that unequivocal support for and empowerment of the Party is essential to achieving the By perpetuating the narrative that China's global success is contingent upon the unrivaled authority of the Party, the CCP asserts its relevance in society and its dominance in dictating national policies.

---

<sup>6</sup> Simon Denyer, "China sets up new foreign aid agency to better project influence abroad," *The Washington Post*, March 13, 2018, accessed March 20, 2021, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/china-promotes-foreign-aid-bolsters-environment-ministry-in-government-shake-up/2018/03/13/d3c26d94-267a-11e8-ab19-06a445a08c94\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/china-promotes-foreign-aid-bolsters-environment-ministry-in-government-shake-up/2018/03/13/d3c26d94-267a-11e8-ab19-06a445a08c94_story.html).

<sup>7</sup> Xinhua News Agency, "Full text of resolution on amendment to CPC Constitution," October 24, 2017, accessed on March 19, 2021, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/24/c\\_136702726.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/24/c_136702726.htm).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



The political motivation underlying the ethos that an unrivaled CCP is required for China's rise is multifaceted. On a surface level, a strong Party begets a formidable government capable of asserting itself within the global hierarchy. If China hopes to achieve a global leadership position, then the CCP must be efficient, well-organized, and capable of supporting the tasks at hand. Additionally, since the nation's founding in 1949, the CCP remains a focal point for China's political identity. A relic of cultural history and a symbol of China's revolutionary past, the CCP political apparatus will invariably maintain its enduring relevance in China. On a more nuanced level, efforts to empower the CCP as the cornerstone of Chinese politics and society reveal an overwhelming governmental fixation with curating and perpetuating a distinct Chinese nationalist identity. This nationalist identity must inspire the Chinese people to support China's rise and deter international doubters of China's global ambitions. Ultimately, a nationalist ideology is the CCP's formidable tool for consolidating public approval, deterring dissension, and espousing a sympathetic global image. The modern iteration of the CCP transformed from a formidable political organization and symbol of the revolution into the executor of China's dream of a hegemonic future.

With its unprecedented authority over Chinese political and social life, the CCP perpetuated a modern state-centric constructivist nationalist narrative. This nationalist narrative relies on one primary concept: China must overcome its historic traumas and the negative influences of modernity to fulfill the CCP's imagination of Chinese rejuvenation, known as the China Dream. To achieve China's glorious future, China must redress the ills of the century of humiliation—a common reference in Xi Jinping's speeches—and assert its rightful position within the international hierarchy. To the CCP, modernity—Western colonizers, global conflicts, capitalist economic influences—created the contemporary nation downtrodden by circumstance

but dedicated to revival. China's self-image as a wronged but virtuous civilization, the natural center of a hierarchical arrangement of Asian states, is already causing it to act in ways that are oppressive to its people, worrying to its neighbors and destabilizing to regional peace and security.<sup>10</sup> The CCPs emphasis on historic traumas facilitates oppressive policies in support of manufactured modern nationalism. Effectively, the CCPs evolution to state-centric constructivist nationalism would not be possible without its modern nationalist foundation; both ideas unite to form modern Chinese nationalism. This nationalism surpasses unity through ethnic identity, cultural affiliation, or historical traumas alone. Instead, the CCPs brand of nationalism prioritizes the importance of, the authority of, and obedience to the Chinese state. Like Eugen Weber described French nationalism, the CCP similarly "instilled a national view of things in regional minds and confirmed the power of that view by offering advancement to those who adopted it." Loyalty to the Party, State, and Xi Jinping's vision of Chinese rejuvenation—socialism with Chinese characteristics—is the ultimate unifier for the Chinese people. Expertly blending historical traumas, modern adversities, and future aspirations, the CCPs manufactured nationalism supports the Party's global aspirations.

To perpetuate this nationalist ethos, the CCP emphasizes three concepts: the importance of national unity, the authority of the central government, and the creation of a positive global image. National unity will provide the CCP with the domestic stability required to execute the hard tasks of the China Dream. The CCPs fixation with establishing domestic stability and national unity is most evident in their treatment of Muslim minorities in the Western province of Xinjiang. Similarly, India's treatment of Muslim minorities in Kashmir emphasizes these troubling trends. While the international community largely views China's treatment of Muslim

---

<sup>10</sup> Bill Hayton. *The Invention of China*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 244.

minority groups in Xinjiang as oppressive, China's refusal to reform indicates that they view national unity as paramount. Like their approach to establishing national unity, the CCP employs similar coercive tactics to empower the authority of the CCP via corruption reforms. Xi Jinping's much-lauded war on corruption essentially demonstrates the CCPs use of alternative means to quell internal dissent, eradicate political rivals, and empower a Party-State structure where a Xi Jinping compliant CCP is supreme. Finally, the CCPs treatment of environmental civil society organizations indicates its desire to perpetuate a global image as a leader on environmental issues. The Party's public declarations of environmentalism contradict its consistent tightening of Chinese civil society. Under Xi Jinping, the CCP prioritizes internal unity, the central government's authority, and creating a positive global image as small chapters of their larger political narrative.

A deeper analysis of China's present tactics to enforce national unity, empower the central government's authority, and perpetuate a positive global image as a leader on environmental affairs is imperative for multiple reasons. First, these three examples are paramount to understanding China's nationalist ideology. While seemingly independent topics, China's policies regarding Muslim minority rights, domestic corruption, and environmental civil society directly support different facets of their larger nationalist ethos. A thorough investigation into each case provides essential history and commentary on politics, culture, and society in China, crucial to understanding the nation's many contradictions. Second, a greater insight into China's nationalist ideology can unearth its grander ambitions. The CCPs nationalist narrative supports nation building both within China and beyond its borders. While China's designs to establish itself as the global hegemon are readily apparent, their tactics to achieving this goal are still developing. If the international community understands how China views or reacts to

domestic issues, perhaps it will indicate their approaches to future crisis, developing conflicts, and other global concerns. China's coercive tactics to support Chinese rejuvenation could allude to similar coercive tactics within the global community. Third, an in-depth analysis of Chinese nationalism will provide further conversation for this field of study. As a Communist quasi-authoritarian state characterized by a nearly capitalist-like quest for economic superiority, China is a nation full of paradoxes that provides plentiful material for analysis. The standard concepts of nationalism fail to address the singular experience in China today. To be adequately analyzed, Chinese nationalism must be assessed through a distinctly Chinese lens. Ultimately, a greater understanding of China's nationalist ethos will better equip the international community to discern China's current political ideology and perhaps predict their future intentions. The CCPs policies toward Muslim minority populations, domestic corruption, and environmental civil society indicate that national rejuvenation can only be achieved through a distinct, Xi Jinping designed, Chinese nationalism. In the coming years, nationalism with Chinese characteristics may come to dictate politics in China and beyond its borders.

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

### **Nationalism and Muslim Minority Rights**

As the pre-eminent powers in Asia, India and China dominate the region's socio-economic and political dynamics. This regional primacy also supports both nations' broader aspirations elevating their status within the international hierarchy. Despite these similarities, India and China have vastly divergent cultural histories, societal norms, and governmental structures. By examining each nation's Muslim minority rights policies, it is evident that both India and China prescribe to similar nationalist agendas. The administrations of India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and China's General Secretary Xi Jinping provide classic examples of coercive nationalism in the pursuit of domestic stability and national unity. While extensive, the existing academic literature on nationalism and Muslim minority rights in India and China focus extensively on policy implementation without shedding ample light on these policies greater implications for both Asia and the global community.

### **Theories of Nationalism**

Three primary schools of thought emerge throughout theoretical discussions of nationalism: primordialism, modernism, and state-centric constructivism. Primordialists, like Anthony Smith, argue that nations develop from historical ethnies, or ethnic communities. With their shared memories, myths, symbols, and values, ethnies will invariably form groups and,

eventually, nations that will create distinct nation-states.<sup>11</sup> Unlike the primordialists assertion that ethnies are the foundation for the nation-state, modernists, like Ernest Gellner, maintain that nationalism is a creation of modernity that reflects the basic social organization of the industrial world and its people.<sup>12</sup> The mass migrations, global conflicts, technological advancements, and social realignments of modernity are the most substantial influencers of the development of nationalist sentiment. Like modernists view nationalism through the scope of modern traumas and advancements, state-centric constructivists similarly view nationalism as a modern development. In *From Peasants to Frenchmen*, Eugen Weber argued that France's Third Republic (1870-1914) was the originator of the French republic. Despite France's lengthy history, it was the homogenization of society and culture through the French government's effective policies which created the French nation-state. Thus, for state-centric constructivists, the nation develops not from ethnic identification or the trials of modernity but the careful calculation of an effective government. The theories of primordialism, modernism, and state-centric constructivism provide a use framework to analyze contemporary nationalism.

To specifically address the ethnicity's influence on the development of nationalist sentiment, scholars largely identify two realms: civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism. While civic nationalism maintains that national identity is purely political, ethnic nationalism maintains that national identity is purely cultural.<sup>13</sup> Under the tenants of civic nationalism, individuals with similar views or principles voluntarily unite behind a common ideology, regardless of their ethnic, religious, or cultural heritage. Conversely, nineteenth century German political thinkers

---

<sup>11</sup> Smith, 446.

<sup>12</sup> Gellner, 29.

<sup>13</sup> Genevieve Zubrzycki, "The Classical Opposition Between Civic and Ethnic Models of Nationhood: Ideology, Empirical Reality and Social Scientific Analysis," *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 139 (2002): 284, accessed May 2, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41274824>.

such as Johann Gottfried Herder and Johann Gottlieb Fichte argue that nationalism is determined only by ethnic similarities. For Herder and Fichte, a cultural nation can precede political unity, yet statehood must inevitably develop to perpetuate the singularity of an ethnic or cultural group.<sup>14</sup> While still components of both civic and ethnic conceptions of nationalism, social interactions and cultural cohesion is ultimately secondary to the ethnic ties that citizens who support an ethnic nationalist ethos. To address ethnicity's effects on the development of nationalist thought, a thorough understanding of the nuances of civic and ethnic nationalism is imperative.

This tension between interpretations of civic and ethnic nationalisms culminates with various scholars arguing for the classification of nationalist schools of thought as Western or Eastern. Hans Kohn, specifically, establishes a distinction between “French” and “German” understandings of the nationhood by categorizing “good” nationalism as civic, liberal, progressive, inclusive and unifying while corresponding to “civilized” western democracies.<sup>15</sup> Conversely, “bad” nationalism is ethnic, primitive, conservative, regressive, exclusive, divisive, and typical of Eastern nations.<sup>16</sup> While these distinctions between “good” and “bad” nationalism can be pejorative—and must be assessed within Kohn's socio-historic lens of an embattled World War II era consciousness at its publication in 1944—on a larger scale they highlight the broader reality of ethnicity's involvement in nation building. According to Kohn, the state preceded the nation; civic nation building was therefore guided by and coincided with the interests of the state, while in the East, the emergence of nations preceded the building of the

---

<sup>14</sup> Zubrzycki, 284.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 275.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 275.

state.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, Kohn argues that the ethnic nationalism of newly established nations can develop into the civic nationalism of modernized societies. Using Kohn's approach to classify nationalism between Western and Eastern nations, the concerted fabrication of civic nationalism by like-minded citizenry grants the ethos a semblance, however misguided, of stability over ethnically centered nationalism.

From scholarly discussions specific to modern Chinese nationalism, two primary schools of thought emerge regarding the origins of China's contemporary policies: they are a response to the century of humiliation, or they are the manifestation of China's historic conception of their essentiality to the global community. William Callahan, Jacqueline Newmyer Deal and Wu Guoguang argue that contemporary Chinese nationalism is founded upon the early twentieth century passionate and somehow despondent response to China's decline as it encountered the West.<sup>18</sup> The traumas of the inequalities of the colonial period and the fall of the Qing Dynasty created a nation desperate to overcome its perceived continual biases. While Callahan, Deal, and Guoguang found their arguments upon China's twentieth century indignities, Ian Johnson and Bill Hayton maintain that traditional perceptions of Chinese exceptionalism forms the basis of modern nationalism. While Johnson and Hayton acknowledge the importance of the century of humiliation in the formation of modern Chinese policies, they place greater weight on the broader Chinese notion of national superiority. Specifically, a country that believes it has a superior civilization, that its population evolved separately from the rest of humanity and that it has a special place at the top of an imperial order will always be seen as a threat by its neighbors

---

<sup>17</sup> Yael Tamir, "Not So Civic: Is there a Difference between Ethnic and Civic Nationalism?" *Annual Review of Political Science*: 22: 424, accessed May 2, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-022018-024059>.

<sup>18</sup> Guoguang Wu, "From Post-Imperial to Late Communist Nationalism: Historical Change in Chinese Nationalism from May Fourth to the 1990s," *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (2008): 469, accessed May 1, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20455052>.



and the world.<sup>19</sup> Even if China's century of humiliation had not occurred, their desire for global prominence would remain constant. Despite diverging opinions on the origins of modern Chinese nationalism, all scholars maintain that China's current nationalist ambitions are singularly focused on perpetuating the power of the Chinese state.

### **Historic Origins of India and China**

Their historic origins greatly influenced India and China's respective identities. India's political identity, many scholars argue, is intimately tied to adherence to the secularism associated with democratic ideals. India's founders sought to not only afford themselves the freedoms lost under British colonial rule, but also to eradicate the fears of a majority hegemony by providing special status to the minorities, Amalendu Misra argues.<sup>20</sup> Safeguards were provided to minority groups, specifically Muslims, to create an institutionalized space for cultural observances. This institutionalized space, Alam Anwar claims, is the cornerstone of Indian multiculturalism and federalism.<sup>21</sup> Since its founding, successive Indian governments used strict adherence to federalist ideals as the foundation for minority rights legislation and practices. Ultimately, secularism as the basis for governance has been critical to the success of Indian democracy, Rollie Lal argues.<sup>22</sup> The academic emphasis on identifying secularism in Indian minority rights policies fails to address the shortcomings of its oversimplification in execution. Although India provides generalized freedoms to minority groups, the effect of broad

---

<sup>19</sup> Hayton, 248.

<sup>20</sup> Amalendu Misra. "Hindu Nationalism and Muslim Minority Rights in India." *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 7, no. 1 (2000): 3, accessed March 21, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/24675146](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24675146).

<sup>21</sup> Anwar Alam, "Political Management of Islamic Fundamentalism: A View from India," *Ethnicities* 7, no. 1 (2007): 46, accessed March 21, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/23889420](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23889420).

<sup>22</sup> Rollie Lal. "Islam in India." In *The Muslim World After 9/11*, by Rabasa Angel M., Nernard Cheryl, Chalk Peter, Fair C. Christine, Karasik Theodore, Lal Rollie, Lesser Ian, and Thaler David. RAND Corporation, 2004: 306, accessed March 21, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg246af.16](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg246af.16).

policies on continued discrimination and political, economic, and social disparities within the Indian population is apparent.

While an emphasis on secularism dictates India's origin narrative, China's national identity is heavily influenced by the communal structure of the Han majority, as Wang Jianping writes.<sup>23</sup> This communal structure draws influence not only from the traditional Confucian emphasis on familial unity, but also the example of the Soviet Union. In Wang Jianping's examination of China's Islamic revival movement, the author notes that the Chinese government applied a two-pronged strategy of containment and absorption based on Josef Stalin's tactics in the 1950s.<sup>24</sup> If minority groups could be integrated into the idealism of a greater society--in Stalin's case via aggression rather than political representation--then errant thought could be stifled. Raphael Israeli claims China drew more heavily on the absorption vice containment approach.<sup>25</sup> Inspired by Lenin's views that national minorities should have the right of secession and the proletariat should seek to unify to diminish desires for secessionism, Israeli proposes that China's minority policies continue the assumption that communal identity supersedes individual or group rights.<sup>26</sup> Like Stalin's policies aggressively denied a heterogeneous Soviet Union, so too did the Cultural Revolution over-emphasize communal identity. Gerard Postiglione argues that during the Cultural Revolution nationality policy was no longer denied because the idea of China as a multinational country was destroyed.<sup>27</sup> Just as the Soviet Union inspired contemporary

---

<sup>23</sup> Wang Jianping. "Unity in Diversity: The Islamic Revival Movement in China Today." In *Religion in China: Major Concepts and Minority Positions*, edited by Deeg Max and Scheid Bernhard, Wien: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2015: 176, accessed March 25, 2020. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1vw0pdc.13.

<sup>24</sup> Jianping, 176.

<sup>25</sup> Raphael Israeli. "The Muslim Minority in the People's Republic of China." *Asian Survey* 21, no. 8 (1981): 911, accessed March 25, 2020, doi:10.2307/2643890.

<sup>26</sup> Israeli, 911.

<sup>27</sup> Gerard Postiglione. "National Minorities and Nationalities Policy in China." In *The National Question: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Self-Determination in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Berberoglu Berch, Temple University Press, 1995: 275, accessed April 5, 2020, www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt14bstd1.15.

Chinese communal identity, so too did its dissolution from 1989-1991 facilitate a policy change, according to June Teufel Dreyer.<sup>28</sup> The Soviet Union's loss of control over its client states as well as the Tiananmen Square protests fed pre-existing fears that discontented ethnic majorities could potentially destabilize societal progress. According to these scholars, the Soviet Union serves as both an example of proper communism and a cautionary tale of the communal identity suffering due to minority groups.

### **Legal Protections of Minority Rights**

The ideologies of secularism and communal society influenced the implementation of these theories into law. Many scholarly works examine the special status granted to minority groups in legislation. For example, Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay discusses the powers granted to Muslims, especially Kashmiri Muslims, in the Indian constitution and the reaffirmation of this synthetic identity through robust political discourse.<sup>29</sup> Manoj Kumar Sinha, however, both details the various powers provided to Kashmiri Muslims while also pointing out that the Constitution fails to create an executable nationalized policy on minorities. By deferring to individual states, the Indian federal government leaves the systems vulnerable to corruption, prejudice, and overall state inaction.<sup>30</sup> In China, similarly, the broadness of federal policies contributes to inefficient execution at the state level. The Western Development Plan, initiated in 1999 to boost industrial development and overall economic improvement of western China, is touted as a significant contributor to curtailing Muslim minority rights. As a result of the expansive powers granted to provincial governments (largely run by Han Chinese appointees from Eastern provinces) and

---

<sup>28</sup> June Teufel Dreyer. "China's Vulnerability to Minority Separatism." *Asian Affairs* 32, no. 2 (2005): 69, accessed March 25, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/30172869](http://www.jstor.org/stable/30172869).

<sup>29</sup> Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay. "Kashmir's Secessionist Movement Resurfaces: Ethnic Identity, Community Competition, and the State." *Asian Survey* 49, no. 6 (2009): 927, accessed March 21, 2020, doi:10.1525/as.2009.49.6.924.

<sup>30</sup> Manoj Kumar Sinha. "Minority Rights: A Case Study of India." *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 12, no. 4 (2005): 366, accessed March 22, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/24675308](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24675308).

unrealistic development goals, the economic and political freedoms of the Uighurs decreased, Barry Sautman and Elizabeth Van Wie Davis claim.<sup>31</sup> The Muslim experience in Kashmir and Xinjiang is an example of the detrimental nature of unspecific and unmonitored minority rights policies.

In addition to addressing the procedural inefficiencies of some minority rights policies, academic literature also examines the cultures of corruption these broken systems invariably support. Arun Kumar Nayak notes that India's central failure is that it has democratic institutions but failed in democratic action.<sup>32</sup> The ambiguity of India's policies toward Kashmir created a vacuum where non-governmental organizations and unaffiliated actors could impart significant influence in local economies, politics, and society. Nalini Kant Jha asserts that in questioning the traditional authorities of the state, these empowered non-state actors could exploit both Kashmir's underdeveloped economy and the vulnerability of the increasingly polarized local population.<sup>33</sup> India's mismanagement of ethno-national demands facilitated competition and corruption between central political elites and subnational ethnic elites in Kashmir, as Jugdep S. Chima argues.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, China's mismanagement of ethnic demands in Western provinces begets unforeseen circumstances. Jihyeon Jeong and Elizabeth Van Wie Davis detail the effects of the rampant corruption, widespread migration from Han majority areas, and unequal economic benefits of the Western Development Plan in their respective works.<sup>35</sup> The minority groups the

---

<sup>31</sup> Barry Sautman. "Paved with Good Intentions: Proposals to Curb Minority Rights and Their Consequences for China." *Modern China* 38, no. 1 (2012): 17, accessed April 5, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/23216933](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23216933).

<sup>32</sup> Arun Kumar Nayak. "Democracy And Development In India: An Investigation." *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues* 18, no. 4 (2014): 40-69, accessed February 25, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/48505121](http://www.jstor.org/stable/48505121).

<sup>33</sup> Jha, Nalini Kant. "Dynamics of India's Security and Foreign Policy: Responding to Challenges of South Asian Domestic Milieu." *India Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (2005): 39, accessed March 15, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/45073360](http://www.jstor.org/stable/45073360).

<sup>34</sup> Jugdep S. Chima, "Ethnic Subnationalist Movements in Contemporary South Asia: An Introduction." *Asian Survey* 49, no. 6 (2009): 916, accessed March 15, 2020, doi:10.1525/as.2009.49.6.915.

<sup>35</sup> Elizabeth Van Wie Davis. "Uyghur Muslim Ethnic Separatism in Xinjiang, China." *Asian Affairs* 35, no. 1 (2008): 15, accessed March 25, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/27821503](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27821503).

Western Development Plan sought to uplift through an expansion of industry and infrastructure were the most adversely affected by the plan's administration. Uighurs, specifically, lost lucrative industry contracts and influential government positions to Han Chinese migrants, exacerbating the pre-existing socio-economic divide and political polarization. Rather than correcting regional imbalances, the Western Development Plan took on strategies and projects that increasingly strengthened only select border regions and their peoples.<sup>36</sup> While the rejuvenation policies of Kashmir and Xinjiang were economic successes for their respective nations, they ultimately widened the socio-economic divide between Muslim minorities and the majority populations.

### **Nationalism in Political Parties**

From these economically successful yet culturally taxing development programs, two distinctive nationalistic ideologies gained momentum. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) championed Hindutva in India, while the CCP emphasized the prestige of the Han majority in China. Scholars note that both political forces are central to both India and China's reinvigorated national identities. In tying culture to race and creating the possibility of defining a "pure" nation, Hindutva expands the notion of minorities as foreign by simultaneously supporting a territorial idea of culture, Sangeeta Kamat notes.<sup>37</sup> This notion of cultural and territorial alienness specifically endangers the Muslims of Kashmir, who are central targets of the BJP's Hindutva rhetoric and oppressive policies. Muhammad Waqas Sajjad and Anand Teltumbde describe the pervasive thought that Kashmiri Muslims will one day both overtake the Indian Hindu

---

<sup>36</sup> Jihyeon Jeong. "Ethnic Minorities in China's Western Development Plan." *Journal of International and Area Studies* 22, no. 1 (2015): 6, accessed March 25, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/43490277](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43490277).

<sup>37</sup> Sangeeta Kamat and Biju Mathew. "Mapping Political Violence in a Globalized World: The Case of Hindu Nationalism." *Social Justice* 30, no. 3 (2003): 9, accessed March 22, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/29768205](http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768205).

population and bring the downfall of the unifying common culture of Hinduism.<sup>38</sup> While the BJP fears the loss of a distinctive Hindu Indian culture, the CCP similarly fears a loss of a Han Chinese identity. Much like the violence of Kashmiri separatists adversely affect regional industries and investments, so too do Uighur separatists threaten the economic stability of the region. According to Hasmath Reza, heightened religious consciousness among Muslim Uighurs, if not adequately managed, can both lead to dissent and support a discourse that rejects national unity.<sup>39</sup> The national pride and unity the CCP promotes—heightened since Xi Jinping’s leadership in the party—is perceived to be in peril from the divergent forces. Xinjiang’s Uighurs are considered a threat to the unified identity deemed essential to China’s advancement.

The adverse effects of renewed Indian and Chinese nationalism culminate in the present treatment of Kashmiri and Uighur Muslims. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has virtually eradicated Muslim Indian citizenship through the BJP’s Citizenship Amendment Bill. Under Xi Jinping’s direction the CCP has placed thousands of Uighurs in indoctrination camps. While both cases claim their actions are justified based on separatist violence, the underlying ideology is a problematic interpretation of the essentiality of national unity. This paper seeks to examine what Li Xi Yuan describes as the dynamic relationship between ethnicity and nationalism and the similar factors that ignite them both.<sup>40</sup> From the existing academic literature, parallels exist between India and China’s political origins, ideological goals, and legislative shortcomings.

---

<sup>38</sup> Muhammad Waqas Sajjad. "Examining the State of Muslim Minority under Modi’s BJP since 2014." *Strategic Studies* 38, no. 4 (2018): 23, accessed March 22, 2020, doi:10.2307/48544275.

<sup>39</sup> Reza Hasmath. "Managing China’s Muslim Minorities: Migration, Labor and the Rise of Ethnoreligious Consciousness Among Uyghurs in Urban Xinjiang." In *Religion and the State: A Comparative Sociology*, edited by Barbalet Jack, Possamai Adam, and Turner Bryan S., 124, accessed March 25, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1wn0r14.11](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1wn0r14.11).

<sup>40</sup> Li Xi Yuan. "Ethnicity or Nationality?: Minority Policy and Ethnic Conflict in Contemporary China." In *Ethnicity as a Political Resource: Conceptualizations across Disciplines, Regions, and Periods*, edited by University of Cologne Forum ‘Ethnicity as a Political Resource,’ 2015: 165, accessed April 5, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1xxstw.14](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1xxstw.14).

However, a more in-depth analysis of the connection between these ideas and the present policies in each nation is necessary for a wholistic understanding of each state's nationalistic goals. Nationalistic fervor characterized by the continual degradations of minority rights, regardless of a country's type of government, could foreshadow future conflict in the regional or global community. The examples of India and China indicate that it is a country's degree of nationalism, not its type of government, that has the greater impact on the development of minority rights policies.

### **Domestic Corruption**

Systemic corruption is a prevailing characteristic of Chinese society. In addition to its cultural significance throughout Chinese history, systemic corruption also affects contemporary China's political, economic, and social development. As China continues to modernize and assert its influence within the global hierarchy, continued analysis of the significant factors influencing Chinese growth is inevitable. Specifically, the origins and implications of systemic corruption is a topic increasingly under investigation in academic literature. Thus far, literature primarily focuses on analyzing corruption's cultural roots, the nature of recent anticorruption reforms, and Xi Jinping's underlying political agenda as articulated by CCP policies. While ambitious, Xi Jinping's well-publicized anticorruption initiatives are unproven in their effectiveness and indicate a larger political narrative.

### **Inherent Difficulties of Corruption Studies**

To complete a thorough analysis of China's corruption, acknowledging corruption studies' inherent difficulties is imperative. Specifically, meticulous reporting, metrics, and subsequent analysis are unavailable for a nation still under the firm control of a single-party system. The gradual social, economic, and political diversification of Chinese society is only permissible

within the CCP control scope. Thus, to many corruption scholars, China poses additional complications to the already difficult study of corruption. Yong Guo notes that developing nations especially experience the most significant difficulties in proper reporting due to the “hiddenness gap” and the “sensitivity gap.”<sup>41</sup> Both gaps account for the delay in identifying and reporting corruption by developing nations, particularly those subject to centralized rule. Inaccurate reporting of corrupt offenses also affects the development of organizational structures to support adjudicating these issues. Scholars such as Andrew Wedeman and Yong Guo have discussed the diverging state and CCP corruption agencies, which convolute an already burdened system.<sup>42</sup> While many developing nations like China succumb to corruption underreporting due to inadequate organizational or legal support, Andrew Wedeman also notes that China is particularly susceptible to the Transparency International (TI) rating system's ambiguity. Because it is based on numerous polls and applicable to countries with a wide range of rankings, the TI sample will never be comprehensive or representative.<sup>43</sup> The TI sample naturally underrepresents countries in which corruption is prevalent, like China. Domestic organizational issues and the international corruption index rankings' inherent ambiguities beget complications in establishing China's accurate corruption assessments.

### **Cultural Perceptions of Corruption**

While corruption analysis is subject to the inherent difficulties of accurate reporting, corruption in China is also affected by historic cultural biases. Many scholars observe that to the Chinese, corruption is so widespread and commonplace that it is widely accepted. Kilkon Ko and

---

<sup>41</sup> Yong Guo. "Corruption in Transitional China: An Empirical Analysis." *The China Quarterly*, no. 194 (2008): 350, accessed April 15, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/20192201](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20192201).

<sup>42</sup> Andrew Wedeman. "The Intensification of Corruption in China." *The China Quarterly*, no. 180 (2004): 904, accessed April 16, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/20192410](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20192410).

<sup>43</sup> Andrew Wedeman, "Great Disorder Under Heaven: Endemic Corruption and Rapid Growth in Contemporary China," *China Review* 4, no. 2 (2004): 11, accessed April 16, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/23461882](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23461882).



Cuifen Wang also note that in imperial China, the misappropriation of public funds was accepted because it was assumed that public officials had the right and public authority to do so.<sup>44</sup> The precedence of accepting corruption in imperial China still exists in modern China, as Melanie Manion notes. Corruption is viewed as an income supplement<sup>45</sup> or merely as an impropriety rather than an actual crime.<sup>46</sup> Lucien Pye similarly notes overwhelming compliance with corrupt practices in the historic Confucius bureaucratic culture and the modern Party-State apparatus. Pye notes that widespread acceptance of corruption is also linked to the feigned compliance system of Chinese politics.<sup>47</sup> By failing to publicly acknowledge political factions or bureaucratic misbehavior, Chinese politicians can continue participating in corrupt activities while simultaneously denying their existence. Blatant predatory actions by political officials, government agencies, or even ordinary business personnel foster a unilateral resignation to accept corruption. Ultimately, numerous scholars highlight the historic resigned acceptance of corruption as a significant source in its continued prevalence in contemporary China.

While many scholars note the historical acceptance of corruption by the Chinese public as the main factor in its enduring influence, some scholars maintain that outrage, rather than resignation, at corruption is a superior characterization. Andrew Wedeman notes that high profile corruption scandals often capture the rabid attention of the Chinese public. For example, the Gang of Four trials in the 1970s and the suicide of Beijing Vice Mayor Wang Baosen in the late

---

<sup>44</sup> Kilkon Ko and Cuifen Weng. "Structural Changes in Chinese Corruption." *The China Quarterly*, no. 211 (2012): 734, accessed April 15, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/23509511](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23509511).

<sup>45</sup> Melanie Manion. "An Explosion of Corruption in Mainland China." *Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press (2004): 96, accessed April 15, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvk12s0m.6](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvk12s0m.6).

<sup>46</sup> Manion, 90.

<sup>47</sup> Lucian W. Pye. "Factions and the Politics of Guanxi: Paradoxes in Chinese Administrative and Political Behaviour." *The China Journal*, no. 34 (1995): 42, accessed October 5, 2020, doi:10.2307/2950132.

1990s captivated the public.<sup>48</sup> Roderic Broadhurst and Peng Wang describe a similar public frenzy regarding the prosecution of beloved politician Bo Xilai, who established a cult-like base of support among the masses.<sup>49</sup> Interestingly, some scholars note that public outrage and disapproval for corruption is not limited to the salacious characterization of corruption scandals in the media. Yufan Hao and Michael Johnston contend that as Chinese political and economic environments become more open due to the various reforms of recent history, the public has greater expectations, and thus disappointment, with their political system. Hao and Johnston note that “there is popular outrage over corruption in the political setting” and an overwhelming “discontent coexists with a limited tolerance for other varieties of corrupt conduct in a system in which it is often unclear just what is corruption and what is reform.”<sup>50</sup> For Hao and Johnston, outrage at corruption exists throughout Chinese society, mostly prevalent due to changes in the reform era. Regardless of its source, public anger at corruption receives considerable study in corruption literature.

### **Xi Jinping’s Anticorruption Campaigns**

The various anticorruption campaigns in China’s history pale in comparison to the anticorruption initiatives under Xi Jinping’s leadership of the CCP. Scholars concur that the short-range anticorruption campaigns of the 1980s and 1990s had minimal effect on lessening systemic corruption. In 2012, Xi Jinping relaunched a Maoist ‘rectification’ initiative to tackle the evils of the ‘Four Winds’ (formalism, bureaucracy, hedonism, waste).<sup>51</sup> Andrew Wedeman

---

<sup>48</sup> Andrew Wedeman. "Corruption and Politics." *China Review*, 1996: 84, accessed April 16, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/23453140](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23453140).

<sup>49</sup> Roderic Broadhurst and Peng Wang. “After the Bo Xilai Trial: Does Corruption Threaten China’s Future?” *Survival* (00396338) 56, no. 3 (June 2014): 160.

<sup>50</sup> Yufan Hao and Michael Johnston, "Corruption and the future of economic reform in China," in *Political Corruption: Concepts and Contexts*, ed. Arnold J. Heidenheimer and Michael Johnston (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 697.

<sup>51</sup> Wedeman, “Corruption and Politics,” 64.

argues that consolidating public support behind Maoist traditions has been central to the success of Xi Jinping's anticorruption initiatives. Xi Jinping's well-publicized campaigns are essentially Maoist-like revivals that reaffirm the traditional values of the CCP.<sup>52</sup> While previous rectification campaigns targeted wide ranges of society, Xi Jinping's anticorruption reforms appear to highlight abuses within the CCP. Yufan Hao and Michael Johnston note that the Maoist mass campaigns viewed corruption as an individual wrongdoing rather than as an institutional or systemic problem.<sup>53</sup> While highlighting corrupt party members may target various CCP members, Xi Jinping's anticorruption initiatives address corruption as a systemic, rather than an individual problem. Scholarly literature frequently references the connections between traditional Maoist rectification campaigns and Xi Jinping's anticorruption initiatives as a proponent of their success.

While there is significant scholarly consensus regarding the Maoist influences on Xi Jinping's anticorruption campaigns, there are diverging opinions on these initiatives' underlying designs. Despite the irrefutability of corruption's negative impact on a nation's economic and political stability, Xi Jinping's motivation for undertaking this radical restructuring is uncertain. Two primary schools of thought emerge: anticorruption initiatives are employed to target political rivals or to fortify the legitimacy of the CCP. Thomas Heberer argues that Xi Jinping's corruption campaigns are primarily a function of consolidating the current leadership's power.<sup>54</sup> Heberer also comments that this consolidation of power is a selective fight, since the leadership decides who and whose networks are to be regarded as corrupt.<sup>55</sup> Most scholars use the cases of

---

<sup>52</sup> Broadhurst and Wang, 170.

<sup>53</sup> Hao and Johnston, 593.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas Heberer. "China in 2014: Creating a New Power and Security Architecture in Domestic and Foreign Policies." *Asian Survey* 55, no. 1 (2015): 88, accessed October 4, 2020, doi:10.1525/as.2015.55.1.82.

<sup>55</sup> Heberer, 88.

former Chongqing Party Chief Bo Xilai, People's Liberation Army (PLA) General Xu Caihou, and former Politburo Standing Committee Member Zhong Yongkang as evidence of the biased nature of Xi Jinping's corruption campaigns. Robert Broadhurst notes that Xi Jinping employs anticorruption campaigns to achieve short-term political goals by neutralizing rivals, despite risking further tensions.<sup>56</sup> Throughout academic literature, numerous scholars make effective arguments for the biased nature of those prosecuted by Xi Jinping's corruption reforms.

While the elimination of political rivals is a likely objective of recent anticorruption initiatives, some scholars argue that these reforms pursue broader aspirations. Specifically, Xi Jinping's anticorruption initiatives seek the broader goal of legitimizing the CCP. Shaomin Li argues that anticorruption campaigns garner Xi Jinping invaluable political capital with the general population.<sup>57</sup> John Garrick and Yan Chang Bennett comment that anticorruption campaigns can both reign in the bureaucracy and enhance CCP legitimacy in the eyes of the general public.<sup>58</sup> While the removal of problematic politicians can assist in building Party legitimacy, Garrick and Bennet also argue that the selective mobilization of key law reforms, like corruption, has the effect of negating the potential for alternative discourses.<sup>59</sup> As the CCP attempts to maintain control of society and strengthen public support in the face of growing criticism, fortifying the legitimacy of the CCP is imperative. Dimitar Gueorguiev notes that Xi Jinping's policy priorities arguably say less about his hunger for power than it does about his concern about upsetting the semblance of institutional legitimacy.<sup>60</sup> Xi Jinping's anticorruption

---

<sup>56</sup> Broadhurst and Wang, 157.

<sup>57</sup> Shaomin Li. "Assessment of and Outlook on China's Corruption and Anticorruption Campaigns: Stagnation in the Authoritarian Trap." *Modern China Studies* 24, no. 2 (July 2017): 146-47, accessed October 20, 2020, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=123766305&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

<sup>58</sup> John Garrick and Yan Chang Bennett. "Xi Jinping Thought": Realisation of the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation?" *China Perspectives* 113, no. 1-2 (2018): 103, accessed October 4, 2020, doi:10.2307/26531916.

<sup>59</sup> Garrick and Bennett, 104.

<sup>60</sup> Dimitar Gueorguiev. "Dictator's Shadow: Chinese Elite Politics Under Xi Jinping." *China Perspectives* 113 no. 1-2 (2018): 24, accessed October 4, 2020, doi:10.2307/26531908.

initiatives are publicly popular and politically effective tools to strengthen the legitimacy of the CCP.

Throughout academic literature, there are countless interpretations of the political agenda of the CCP under the leadership of Xi Jinping. While China's global ambitions are readily apparent, the implications of internal societal factors on achieving this ambitious political agenda are still uncertain. Despite the Xi Jinping era's anticorruption initiatives, systemic corruption in China negatively affects political, economic, and social developments. Additionally, by empowering the authority of the central government through attacks on Xi Jinping's rivals, the CCPs anticorruption campaigns support endemic corruption and Xi Jinping's nationalist agenda.

### **Environmental Civil Society**

Inaugurated at the CCPs 17th National Congress, the ethos of an ecological civilization quickly became a central focus of the CCP. While the CCP historically addresses environmental concerns as merely a small facet of its grandiose political agenda, the 17th (2007) and 18th (2012) National Congresses codified environmental conservation as an essential component of China's long-term global ambitions. The passage of stricter environmental legislation and various bureaucratic reforms, and a publicly popular--albeit seemingly unattainable--emissions targets support this theoretical ecological civilization. A rising number of widespread environmental protests, effective domestic and foreign Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and media publicity targeting a generation of environmentally conscious Chinese creates a formidable environmental civil society supportive of the idealistic tenants of the CCPs ecological civilization. While the rising number of environmentally conscious organizations and ecologically conscious government policies are indicators of an increasingly influential environmental civil society, they also support China's rise within the international hierarchy by

mirroring other first-world nations' environmental standards. While robust, China's environmental civil society is a small component of China's broader goals to redefine its global image as a leader in ecological reforms. Ultimately, China's growing environmental consciousness is the result of a civil society immeasurably influenced by the nationalist policies of the CCP under Xi Jinping.

### **Perceptions of Environmental Civil Society in China**

Some scholars characterize civil society in China as incredibly robust, despite government restrictions. For example, Jonathan Schwartz argues that environmental civil society is increasingly influential due to civil society activism from non-state actors such as NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Because the state recognizes the need for an alternative to state intervention, the CCP turns to non-state actors to carry some of the environmental protection burdens.<sup>61</sup> While Schwartz argues that the Chinese government consciously relies on non-state actors to advocate for environmental concerns, Bonny Ling, Wing Lam, Elisabeth Wickeri, and Tina Tan attribute civil society's success to its role as a mediator between the people and the government. Specifically, they comment that environmental civil society is flourishing because it serves as a mediator for societal tensions and a channel for the peaceful airing of grievances.<sup>62</sup> According to Elizabeth Economy, the growing influence of environmental civil society hints at larger phenomena. Economy writes that China's robust environmental civil society—through the growing influence of NGOs and CSOs—indicates an ongoing transformation of state-societal relations.<sup>63</sup> China's burgeoning environmental community

---

<sup>61</sup> Jonathan Schwartz. "Environmental NGOs in China: Roles and Limits." *Pacific Affairs* 77, no. 1 (2004): 28.

<sup>62</sup> Bonny Ling, Wing Lam, Elisabeth Wickeri, and Tina Tan, "China's Civil Society: Controls, Limits and Role in a 'Harmonious Society,'" *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (71) (2007), 125, accessed January 23, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24053286>.

<sup>63</sup> Elizabeth Economy, "The New Politics of the Environment," In *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*, Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press (2010): 137, accessed March 10, 2021, doi:10.7591/j.ctt7z8gj.9.

employs the influence of other CSOs to foster closer ties between the government and the people. Ultimately, there is a prominent scholarly consensus that civil society is a considerable social force in Chinese life.

Despite abundant academic literature arguing that China's environmental civil society is flourishing, some scholars offer a contradictory interpretation. For instance, Phillip Stalley and Dongning Yang contend that there is no widespread network of environmental organizations in China. Stalley and Yang note that despite the immense media attention given to protests, very little of China's environmental activity is contentious; most protests are spontaneous responses to isolated incidents.<sup>64</sup> The underlying theme of China's inability to foster a true environmental movement is the population's resounding belief that the Chinese government can solve all problems, primarily via economic growth. Like Stalley and Yang decry claims of robust Chinese environmental civil society, Samson Yuen argues that the CCP's widespread social repression during Xi Jinping's tenure prohibits the creation of a meaningful environmental movement. While Yuen credits civil society's ability to adapt and avoid crackdowns, this optimism falls short of supporting measurable growth in environmental civil society.<sup>65</sup> Jie Chen describes a balancing act of environmental civil society in a still restrained civic space, where NGOs and CSOs advocate for topics based largely on their judgment of the risks and opportunities from the central government.<sup>66</sup> While highly publicized protests, successful media campaigns, and endurance in the face of mounting government repression are testaments to civil society's

---

<sup>64</sup> Phillip Stalley and Dongning Yang, "An Emerging Environmental Movement in China?" *The China Quarterly*, no. 186 (2006): 337, accessed January 23, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20192616>.

<sup>65</sup> Samson Yuen, "Friend or Foe? The Diminishing Space of China's Civil Society," *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (103) (2015), 56, accessed January 26, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44090380>.

<sup>66</sup> Jie Chen, "Transnational Environmental Movement: Impacts on the Green Civil Society in China," *Journal of Contemporary China* 19, no. 65 (June 2010), 517, accessed January 26, 2021, doi:10.1080/10670561003666103.

durability in China, many scholars ultimately argue that a national movement is both unfeasible and unsustainable.

### **Environmental Civil Society and the CCP**

By analyzing the interactions between environmental civil society and the CCP, some scholars maintain that local governments retain the most bargaining power. Specifically, environmental organizations interact with and are at the mercy of local government authorities. Lei Xie and Hein-Anton Van Der Heijden argue that resources and authority at the provincial level determine the performance of local governments in environmental management.<sup>67</sup> While the ultimate authority of the CCP is expansive, as Ka Zeng and Joshua Eastin note, the CCPs failure to enforce uniform oversight of environmental regulations in local governments fosters both a lack of cross-provincial conformity and confusion.<sup>68</sup> Li Xiaofan echoes this concern, commenting that instead of supporting environmental protection regulations, local governments protect business interests, fail to coordinate with agencies, and increase bureaucratic confusion.<sup>69</sup> These analyses of local governments' autonomy are contradictory to the current narrative of the CCP which focuses on the authority of the central government in all facets of political and social life. Unfortunately, employing the scholars' interpretations mentioned above, environmental regulations and civil society in China are at the mercy of inattentive local governments.

While some scholars assert that local governments' influence hampers the development of environmental civil society and regulations, other scholars maintain that local governments are

---

<sup>67</sup> Lei Xie and Hein-Anton Van Der Heijden, "Environmental Movements and Political Opportunities: The Case of China," *Social Movement Studies* 9, no. 1 (January 2010), 57, accessed February 1, 2021, doi:10.1080/14742830903442527

<sup>68</sup> Ka Zeng and Joshua Eastin, "Environmental Pollution and Regulation in China." In *Greening China: The Benefits of Trade and Foreign Direct Investment*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 37, accessed January 26, 2021, doi:10.2307/j.ctvc5pf20.6.

<sup>69</sup> Xiaofan Li, "Environmental Concerns in China: Problems, Policies, and Global Implications," *International Social Science Review* 81, no. 1/2 (2006), 47, accessed January 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41887258>.



subject to the central government's whims. Therefore, local governments strictly enforce the will of the CCP. For example, Jonathan Schwartz comments that civil society is state-led, and cooperates with, rather than opposes, the central state.<sup>70</sup> Schwartz also argues that the central government is invested in strengthening the environmental protection powers of the environmental protection bureaucracy. If environmental protection agencies are adequately empowered, they will likely continue to align themselves with the central government's agenda. While the central government opposes any erosion to their power over local governments, they will ultimately secede influence to civil society organizations who support the CCPs agenda. Yifei Li and Judith Shapiro view the CCPs agenda as the realization of authoritarian environmentalism, the use of authoritarian methods to accomplish environmental goals.<sup>71</sup> Under this authoritarian environmentalism, environmental issues are all held within the scope of the centralized leadership of the CCP. While inputs from non-state actors (CSOs, NGOs) and oversight by local governments influence the development and enforcement of environmental regulations, the CCP ultimately reigns supreme.

Many scholars contend that the Party's fears of social upheaval invariably influence their attempts to control China's environmental civil society. Elizabeth Economy and Peter Ho argue that a formidable environmental civil society could serve as a destabilizing force and a vessel for societal discontent. Economy and Ho both reference environmental civil society's influence in the final years of the former Soviet Union as a cautionary tale. This environmental movement was also linked to wider issues of human rights and democracy.<sup>72</sup> While Ho argues that a

---

<sup>70</sup> Schwartz, 45.

<sup>71</sup> Yifei Li and Judith Shapiro. *China Goes Green: Coercive Environmentalism for a Troubled Planet*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2020), 9.

<sup>72</sup> Peter Ho. "Greening Without Conflict? Environmentalism, NGOs and Civil Society in China." *Development & Change* 32, no. 5 (November 2001): 896.

crackdown on specific social movements could coincide with relaxations in other realms of society (environmentalism). Guobin Yang argues that environmental civil society takes advantage of the CCPs fears of their future influence. Specifically, Yang comments that environmental CSOs thrive on their political ambiguity.<sup>73</sup> While many environmental CSOs take heed to operate apolitically or align themselves with CCP directives, their continued existence without explicit political aims may still be political.<sup>74</sup> Their continued existence--despite fear-based Party intervention--proves that civil society can both exist and thrive in China. Effective environmental CSOs adeptly circumvent CCP regulations while simultaneously fulfilling Party fears of fomenting a gradual political and social awakening in China.

### **Environmental Protest Movements**

Despite various influences from government and civilian entities and mounting pressure from local and central governments, China's environmental CSOs have supported an array of protest movements since the 1990s. There is considerable attention paid toward the interactions between environmental protests and the central government throughout academic literature. Specifically, many scholars contend that recent environmental protests are successful only because they work within the confines of government restrictions to enact change. Elizabeth Economy and Peter Ho specifically identify protest efforts at the Three Gorges Dam and the Nujiang River as indicative of this concept. While both protests had opposite outcomes, they ultimately exemplify a low-cost approach. Ho notes that the CSOs working on these protest movements courted government approval and influence in policymaking rather than seeking a potentially dangerous confrontation with the national state.<sup>75</sup> According to Lei Xie and Hein-

---

<sup>73</sup> Guobin Yang, "Environmental NGOs and Institutional Dynamics in China," *The China Quarterly*, no. 181 (2005), 55, accessed February 9, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20192443>.

<sup>74</sup> Yang, 55.

<sup>75</sup> Ho, 917.

Anton Van Der Heijden, Friends of Nature--the oldest and most influential environmental CSO in China--heavily supported these protest movements. Coincidentally, Friends of Nature has gained CCP support, remained socially relevant, and operated effectively under CCP mandates for decades due to their advocacy for minimally controversial issues. To continue operating in China, environmental CSOs generally support protest movements that are regionally focused, lack controversy, and fail to threaten the CCP central authority.

In addition to courting CCP approval, many contemporary protest movements also involve large swatches of society. Christoph Steinhardt and Fengshi Wu note that the regionally focused protests of the 2000s notably reached beyond the intellectual elite for support.<sup>76</sup> Scholars credit the Nujiang River protests in 2003 as one of the first incidents of environmental activism that incorporated various social classes. The anti-paraxylene protests in Xiamen and Maoming in 2007 and 2014 included nearly universal support from the local population, regardless of social class. Elizabeth Economy argues that the Xiamen protests were perhaps the first genuine parade--involving 7,000 to 20,000 citizens at its height--since Tiananmen Square.<sup>77</sup> Kingsyhon Lee and Ming-Sho Ho comment that the Maoming protests, specifically, resorted to direct action due to the lack of international and domestic NGO resources.<sup>78</sup> Academic literature frequently references the Nujiang River, Xiamen, and Maoming protests as titular events in signaling environmental protests' mass appeal. Despite both the local and central government's attempts to stifle environmental activism, recent protests reveal that a diverse segment of the

---

<sup>76</sup> Christoph Steinhardt and Fengshi Wu, "In the Name of the Public: Environmental Protest and the Changing Landscape of Popular Contention in China," *China Journal* 75, no. 1 (January 2016), 70, accessed January 23, 2021, doi:10.1086/684010.

<sup>77</sup> Elizabeth C. Economy. "The Great Leap Backward?" *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 5 (September 2007), 39, accessed January 18, 2021, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=asn&AN=26258099&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

<sup>78</sup> Kingsyhon Lee and Ming-Sho Ho, "The Maoming Anti-PX Protest of 2014: An Environmental Movement in Contemporary China," *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (99) (2014), 44, accessed February 9, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24055634>.

Chinese population is willing to voice their concerns against environmental degradation or overuse.

### **Xi Jinping's Ecological Civilization**

The CCPs repeated use of the phrase ecological civilization indicates China's prioritization of environmental issues in the twenty-first century. Since assuming leadership of the Party in 2013, Xi Jinping references a Chinese ecological civilization both in his public speeches and political doctrine. From the array of academic literature analyzing this concept, a common theme emerges: the ecological civilization is both a fulfillment of the past and a vision for the future. Shakeel Ahmad Ramay maintains that the legal execution of the ecological civilization integrates traditional Chinese views of nature with a modern perspective of economic advancement.<sup>79</sup> Policies related to China's ecological civilization are formulated to demonstrate how environmentalism is built on the past but its anticipated achievement is projected into the future, according to Maurizio Marinelli.<sup>80</sup> Marinelli also maintains that the ecological civilization—fully realized under Xi Jinping's leadership—highlights environmental advancement with a stronger sense of urgency.<sup>81</sup> This sense of urgency reinforces that China can only overcome its past failures through the promise of a successful future. According to Coraline Goron, the notion of an ecological civilization is a central positive narrative within Xi Jinping's China Dream.<sup>82</sup> Under Xi Jinping's leadership, the notion of an ecological civilization becomes the irrefutable link between China's past and its ambitious future.

---

<sup>79</sup> Shakeel Ahmad Ramay. *Eco-Civilization: The Chinese Vision of Prosperity*. Report. Sustainable Development Policy Institute, (2020), 10, accessed January 26, 2021, doi:10.2307/resprep25826.8.

<sup>80</sup> Maurizio Marinelli, "How to Build a 'Beautiful China' in the Anthropocene. The Political Discourse and the Intellectual Debate on Ecological Civilization." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 23 (2018), 377, accessed February 15, 2021, doi:10.1007/s11366-018-9538-7.

<sup>81</sup> Marinelli, 378.

<sup>82</sup> Coraline Goron. "Ecological Civilisation and the Political Limits of a Chinese Concept of Sustainability," *China Perspectives*, no. 4 (December 2018), 43, accessed February 15, 2021,

While analysis of ecological civilization through the lens of China's future aspirations is common, scholars also scrutinize the relationship between ecological civilization and economic development. Many maintain that the CCP champions a narrative where sustained economic growth is impossible without environmental protection. Specifically, Li Xiaofan writes, if China's economy continues to grow and facilitate socio-economic changes, then the Chinese population will be more likely to support the broad initiatives of ecological civilization.<sup>83</sup> As the policies and reforms associated with the ecological civilization transform into foundational aspects of Chinese society, then the ultimate goal to facilitate sustainable development and harmony between man and nature will be achieved, according to Li Meng.<sup>84</sup> Scholars generally contend that the ecological civilization's promise cannot be fully realized until China reconciles its quest for economic growth with sound environmental practices. Maurizio Marinelli describes the disparity between economic advancement and sustainability; China's real challenge is how to de-couple economic growth from environmental degradation.<sup>85</sup> Ultimately, many scholars maintain that China must reconcile the ecological civilization with its quest to be a world economic power.

Throughout academic literature, there are a multitude of analyses concerning modern environmentalism in China. While some scholars maintain that environmental civil society is a vital and foundational aspect of Chinese culture, other scholars argue that China's authoritarian tendencies inhibit the formation of any influential environmental civil society. The increasing number of protests and citizen-led movements allude to more significant influence and success

---

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=asn&AN=134400045&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

<sup>83</sup> Li, 47.

<sup>84</sup> Li Meng, "Ecological Civilization Spearheads High-Quality Development in China." *China Today* 68 (2019), 43, accessed January 26, 2021, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=asn&AN=137650325&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

<sup>85</sup> Marinelli, 383.

from Chinese environmental groups. While there is abundant literature related to the restrictions on CSOs since the tenure of Xi Jinping, the analysis concerning the larger narrative of ecological civilization is lacking. Ultimately, an understanding of the state of environmental civil society in China and the multitude of implications of Xi Jinping's singular take on the ecological civilization will provide a culturally relevant assessment of Chinese aspirations.

## Chapter 3

# Coercive National Unity: Nationalism and Muslim Minority Rights in India and China

India and China are not only preeminent powers in Asia, but they are also rising powers within the global community. Apart from their geopolitical prominence, their respective political structures, population demographics, and cultural narratives are each unique. India is the world's largest democracy, with a history of prioritizing the development of democratic institutions. Conversely, the egalitarian origins of the ruling CCP diverge, and the Party increasingly favors autocracy under the guise of promoting prosperity and unity. While only 72% of India's population classifies as Indo-Aryan, China is overwhelmingly 92% Han Chinese. The constitutions of both nations promote religious freedom. Yet, India wrestles with secularism in the face of a substantial Hindu majority and China aggressively promotes reverence to the state as superior to any religious affiliation. Despite these foundational differences, India and China are overwhelmingly similar. Both contemporary nations were founded during the post-WWII period of global uncertainty (India in 1947 and the PRC in 1949), and they each created governments radically different from their predecessors. These novel governments touted their promotion of equality as the antithesis of their corrupt forebears who were either colonial oppressors, foreign invaders, or native sons unduly influenced by alien powers. Although both India and China publicize their promotion of equality, their present treatment of ethnic

minorities, especially the Muslim populations, is lacking. Specifically, the Uighur's of China's Xinjiang region and the Muslims of the semi-autonomous Indian state of Kashmir are recipients of systematic political oppression.

The Muslim experience in India and China is indicative of a significant disparity between each nation's political structure and their respective minority rights policies. While democracy is characterized by democratic consensus, an authoritarian state is characterized by repression. Although China officially identifies as a communist nation, its political and social repression is reminiscent of an authoritarian state. To understand how two countries with antithetical ideologies—democratic consensus and authoritarian repression—possess similar minority rights policies, an examination of their shared goals and philosophies is imperative. This paper will proceed in assessing these shared goals and philosophies in three parts. First, a discussion of the theories of nationalism and minority rights will provide an overview for both India and China's present frameworks. Second, an analysis of the recurring themes of secularism and communal identity in politics supports similar minority rights policies in both nations. Finally, this paper will use an assessment of the current crises of Muslim minorities in Xinjiang and Kashmir to better understand the present nationalistic ideologies of India and China. As India and China continue to gain prominence in both Asia and the global community, an understanding of the societal implications of limiting minority rights is imperative to understanding the scope of each nation's nationalistic sentiment and its potential influence on the world order. Ultimately, India and China's Muslim minority rights policies represent a fabricated modern nationalist ethos intended to enforce national unity.

### **Theories of Nationalism**



An examination of the existing interpretations of nationalism, ethnic identity, and minority rights is necessary to understand India and China's respective approaches to nationalism. Who comprises and what constitutes a nation determines nationalism studies. According to the myriad of theories on nationalism, the nation-state is the catalyst for the development of nationalist sentiment. To some theorists, the nation-state exists purely from an imagined political community, which is both inherently limited and sovereign.<sup>86</sup> This community is imagined because all its members can never conceivably meet, yet they are still united behind similar languages, cultures, or opinions. The community is limited because it has finite membership and is sovereign because it can, in some instances, assert autonomy. The imagined community creates not only a national consciousness, but also the tangible borders and policies of modern nation-states. In addition to an imagined community, nations are also founded upon the abstract notions of privileged classes. Whether it is a physical boundary or an ideological community, nations exist from the moment a handful of influential people decide it should be so.<sup>87</sup> To be an efficient political tool, however, nations must possess mass appeal.<sup>88</sup> When groups of similar cultures form communities where their wants and needs are addressed in a broader social system, a combination of privileged class power and mass appeal occurs. Eventually, people's loyalties and attachments are directed towards the state and legislative systems rather than towards members of their kin group or village.<sup>89</sup> The theoretical origins of nations—both the communities from which they originate and the driving forces which support them—affect present perceptions of nationalism.

---

<sup>86</sup> Anderson, 49.

<sup>87</sup> Eriksen, 126.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 126.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 126.

From the study of defining nations, three schools of thought emerged in nationalism: primordialism (traditional), modernism, and state-centric constructivism. Primordialists maintain that ethnic identity is fundamental to the development of a nation and nationalism. Modern nations originate from pre-existing ethnies (ethnic communities) and nationalisms can thus draw on ethnic sentiments and shared memories, myths, symbols and values.<sup>90</sup> Transcending gender, class, profession, religion or any other experience which fosters solidarity,<sup>91</sup> ethnic identity is the ultimate unifier. Eventually, ethnies will form nations via immigration, the creation of an ethnic nation, or bureaucratic incorporation into existing states. These nations were created by not only united ethnies, but also by the conditions of both the pre-modern and modern world which facilitated change. The evolution of power dynamics, armed conflicts, technological advancements, and demographic changes have affected the global community. Thus, modern nations are both manifestations of historic cultural identities and responses to contemporary problems.

While primordialism views historic ethnic identities as the central influencers of nationalism, modernists maintain that nationalism is purely a modern phenomenon. A principle of political legitimacy,<sup>92</sup> nationalism exists due to the shifting balances of power, industrialization, mass migrations, traumas of regional and global conflicts, and ideological shifts characteristic of only modernity. Although ethnic identity may still play a role in nationalism, to modernists, nationalism is simply the result of the modern changes these ethnic identities experienced. To modernists, nationalism reflects the basic social organization of the industrial

---

<sup>90</sup> Smith, 446.

<sup>91</sup> Erika Harris. "Theories of Nations and Nationalism." In *Nationalism: Theories and Cases*, 46-72. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009. 47.

<sup>92</sup> Harris, "Theories of Nations and Nationalism," 53.

world and industrializing people.<sup>93</sup> In the industrial world, widespread literacy and an emphasis on formal education fostered the creation of both modern cultural and societal unification. Because of these contemporary phenomena, nationalism became a marriage of state and culture.<sup>94</sup> Relatively absent in the static social units of pre-modern times, the cultural homogenization of modernity because of free-moving people and ideas creates a distinct nationalism for the present age. It is modern culture, not ethnic identity, which influences the development of nationalism in contemporary society.

Like modernism, the state-centric constructivist view applies the lens of modernity to its analysis of nationalism development. By examining the fundamental societal changes during France's Third Republic (1870-1914), Eugen Weber concludes that nations are the creations of effective nation-states. Despite France's lengthy and storied history, France's national identity did not manifest until its construction by the French republic and modernity's influences. Modern services produced or supported by the French government such as roads, railroads, schools, markets, military service, and the circulation of money, goods and printed matter provided shared experiences, swept away old commitments, instilled a national view of things in regional minds, and confirmed the power of that view by offering advancement to those who adopted it.<sup>95</sup> Through acculturation—the civilization of the French by urban France, the disintegration of local cultures by modernity and their absorption into the dominant civilization—the French experienced a shared communal identity.<sup>96</sup> This acculturation, however, could not occur without the realities of modernity. While global conflicts, industrialization, and social mobility are

---

<sup>93</sup> Ernest Gellner "Nationalisms and the New World Order." *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 47, no. 5 (1994): 29.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, 31.

<sup>95</sup> Weber, 486.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, 486.

arguably by-products of modern society, Weber argues that the advancements constructed by modern nation-states—education, technology, infrastructure—contribute to national shared identity. The state-centric constructivist school maintains that the political goals of modern nation-states fabricate contemporary nationalism.

Despite their differences, the primordial, modern, and state-centric constructivist schools of thought maintain that ethnic identity exerts varying degrees of influence on nationalism. To further address the effects of ethnicity on nationality, two broad schools of thought can be assessed: civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism. Comprehensive studies of ethnic nationalism were first articulated by the 18<sup>th</sup> century German thinkers Johann Gottfried Herder and Johann Gottlieb Fichte. Collectively, these scholars championed the idea that shared ethnicity, culture, race, or history facilitate creating a nation, thus establishing the hereditary and exclusive nature of inclusion into the ethnic group that serves as a nation's foundation.<sup>97</sup> While ethnic nationalism focuses on the unchangeable cultural, ethnic, geographic, or religious similarities of a specified people, civic nationalism highlights the citizen's inalienable right to select, prefer, or identify with a specified nationalism. Specifically, civic nationalism maintains that national identity is purely political: it is nothing but the individual's choice to belong to a community based on the association of like-minded individuals.<sup>98</sup> During its developmental phase in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, civic nationalism was strongly associated with the ideologies of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Citizens possessed the free will to identify with the revolutionary ideals of the French republic rather than remain confined to their inclusion into a nation based on their inherent ethnic or cultural histories. Discourses on civic and ethnic nationalism propel

---

<sup>97</sup> Zubrzycki, 284.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 284.

contemporary conversations on whether a nation is the creation of human ideologies or the inherent manifestation of ethnic or cultural ties.

Unfortunately, the realities of integrating ethnicity and nationalist thought into governance breeds inherent difficulties. According to some theorists, the most critical issue in the study of nationalism today is how to reconcile cultural diversity and political unity within the state.<sup>99</sup> While multiculturalism and ethnic diversity do not guarantee societal discord, the union of culture and state in ethnically diverse nations will invariably experience conflict. The presence of religious, linguistic, or ethnic minorities in a state, however, are natural sources of conflict in a dynamic modern world.<sup>100</sup> Additionally, because most nationalisms are ethnic in character, the kindred concepts of nationalism and ethnicity may experience social strife.<sup>101</sup> This strife affects both majority and minority groups who experience alienation when the state fails to protect their respective identities. To ensure both groups are accommodated, communities must both acknowledge and accept these cultural or ethnic differences. When societies lack confidence in the government's ability to respect these ethnic differences, nationalism and divisiveness occur.<sup>102</sup> Thus, minority rights decrease because of government inaction and social discord.

Nationalism in India and China since the nineteenth century possesses immense influences from the inherent tensions between ethnic identity and primordial, modern, and state-centric constructivist theories of nationalism. When Great Britain began colonizing the Indian subcontinent in the 1700s, India was populated, ethnically diverse, and characterized by numerous principalities who only rarely unified throughout India's lengthy history. While the

---

<sup>99</sup> Erika Harris, "A Multinational Condition and the Rights of Minorities." In *Nationalism: Theories and Cases*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009. 75.

<sup>100</sup> A. S. Narang, "Ethnic Conflicts and Minority Rights." *Economic and Political Weekly* 37, no. 27 (2002): 2696, accessed May 6, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/4412319](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4412319).

<sup>101</sup> Eriksen, 144.

<sup>102</sup> Narang, 2696.

Indian Rebellion of 1857 successfully transferred the region's control from the East India Company to the British Raj—a separate realm of Great Britain—many of the attempts to assert Indian autonomy were episodic, scattered, and minute in comparison to the more extensive British colonial infrastructure. Despite unification under the British crown, administrative unity imposed from above was entirely different from political unity, which is an essential characteristic of nationhood.<sup>103</sup> The Indian National Congress's (INC) establishment in 1885 to assert Indian concerns within the British Raj provided a powerful outlet for Indian political concerns. The growing Indian upper and middle classes—divided amongst those ambitious for political independence and those protective of the financial security of British oversight—as well as the social and political upheaval of World War I facilitated the creation of a formidable Indian nationalist movement in the early twentieth century.

Tension between the largely Hindu INC and the Muslim League characterized the Indian nationalist movement which developed in the 1920s and 1930s. While Mahatma Gandhi and the younger generation of INC leaders argued for an inclusive and integrative concept of anti-colonial populist nationalism, the Muslim League rapidly moved from a position of advocating the Muslim community's political interests within a single overarching nationalist movement to a position advocating the claim for a separate sovereign Muslim state through a partition of India.<sup>104</sup> To its opposition, the INC's aspirations for a secular, post-colonial India did not adequately account for its vast ethno-religious diversity.<sup>105</sup> Gandhi's immense popularity and political effectiveness combined with additional social upheaval after World War II, facilitated complete Indian independence from Great Britain in 1947. Thus, in 1947, India's nationalist

---

<sup>103</sup> T. V. Sathyamurthy, "Indian Nationalism: State of the Debate." *Economic and Political Weekly* 32, no. 14 (1997): 716, accessed May 8, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4405259>.

<sup>104</sup> Sathyamurthy, 717.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid*, 718.

debate effectively refocused from a fixation with political autonomy to the urgency of reconciling India's proposed secular character with the realities of governing an ethnically, religiously, and socially diverse nation-state. While the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan facilitated majority-minority violence, the tension between India's two largest religious groups—Hindus and Muslims—continues to characterize the realities of nationalist debates on India's historical past and its secular nationalist identity today.

Like India, contemporary Chinese nationalism is invariably influenced by the nation's first experiences with the Western world. The Chinese nationalism originating from the century of humiliation and the brief Nationalist government in the early twentieth century was not merely about celebrating the glories of Chinese civilization; it also commemorated China's weaknesses.<sup>106</sup> Despite multiple periods of upheaval and foreign subjugation during its lengthy dynastic history, China's final dynasty—the Qing dynasty—was wholly unprepared to relinquish its position as the cultural and political center of Asia and thus, in their estimation, the world at the arrival of technologically superior Western nations in the nineteenth century. The West's unequal treaties imposed on the Qing Dynasty after the Opium Wars and nation's defeat by its historic rival (Japan) in the Sino-Japanese wars devastated the Qing Dynasty's conceptions of Chinese superiority. Acutely aware that China under the Qing Dynasty was no longer the center of the universe, the political figures of the nineteenth century grappled with abandoning China's historic perceptions of their global preeminence in pursuit of a worldview that would allow China to adapt to modern times.

While this emphasis on national humiliation, or *guochi*, created in the nineteenth century may seem negative, to Chinese ears the implication is that the Chinese, defined as descendants of

---

<sup>106</sup> William A. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 29, no. 2 (2004): 202, accessed May 1, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40645112>.

the Yellow Emperor, are the heirs of a glorious civilization that will eventually recover their preeminence.<sup>107</sup> As witnesses to the perceived ineptitudes of the Qing Dynasty and multiple defeats by the foreign powers, reformers such as Ling Qichao, Sun Yat-Sen, and Kang Youwei championed an ideology which both glorified China's past and set ambitions for its future. The Nationalist reformers held that the superior nationality, or *minzu*, was invariably linked to the first successful Han Emperor of the Qin dynasty, thus fortifying the pre-existing Chinese notion of national privilege to the Han Chinese majority.<sup>108</sup> Inspired by the Japanese approach of embracing modern technology without adopting foreign (i.e. liberal) political, social, or cultural arrangements, the Nationalist reformers also championed technical modernizations and prioritized economic growth.<sup>109</sup> After the numerous defeats during the century of humiliation, the Nationalists were dedicated to bringing substantial, effective, and profitable advancements to China. This desire to bring change to China in the pursuit of wealth and power was a rational, progressive, and developmental nationalism which focused on resolving fundamental economic problems as well as on promoting social, cultural, and political change.<sup>110</sup> During the Republic of China's existence from 1912-1949, Nationalists leaders espoused a nationalism that highlighted the need for economic and societal modernization while simultaneously empowering the perceived primacy of the Han ethnic minority.

Despite their ambitions for China's future, the Nationalist's control of a newly unified China was tenuous, at best. Their failure to deliver prompt political cohesion, social change, and economic advancements led to their defeat at the hands of the Communist forces in 1949. Upon

---

<sup>107</sup> Jacqueline Newmyer Deal, "China's Nationalist Heritage," *The National Interest*, no. 123 (2013): 48, accessed May 1, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42896536>.

<sup>108</sup> Deal, 48.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 48.

<sup>110</sup> Guoguang, 478.



founding the PRC, Mao Zedong (Chairman Mao) championed a Chinese nationalism focused solely on the tenants of a Chinese Communist Revolution. For Chairman Mao, his revolution trumped restoration as the national priority, though he did appropriate the Nationalist's ethos of comparing China to a heap of "loose sand" requiring unification.<sup>111</sup> While the CCPs disastrous attempts at economic modernization during the Great Leap Forward and social restructuring with the Cultural Revolution proved ultimately financially ineffective and psychologically damaging, they did indoctrinate generations of Chinese citizens into the Party's prioritization of a continuous revolution and dedication to the State. After Chairman Mao's death and Deng Xiaoping's gradual opening of China's economic, social, and physical isolation in 1979, the CCPs Communist revolution continued, albeit on a broader, modern, and globally ambitious scale. Specifically, whereas in the early twentieth century the Chinese merely sought wealth and power, on the threshold of achieving it at its close new nationalist concerns emerged: how should China manage its rise and its challenge to the status quo in the international order?<sup>112</sup> China's transformation from an insular nation singularly focused on Communist revolution in the mid-twentieth century to an economic powerhouse contemplating global hegemony in the late twentieth century supported a contemporary nationalism reverent to China's cultural and political past while simultaneously focused upon future aspirations.

Theories on nationalism, ethnic identity, and minority rights are integral to an overall analysis of nationalism in India and China. Additionally, a comprehensive understanding of both nation's historical views on nationalism is imperative to understanding the modern nationalism developing today and its potential implications for divisive issues. While historically diverse and influential in Asia since antiquity, both India and China's unsuccessful approaches to

---

<sup>111</sup> Deal, 49.

<sup>112</sup> Wu, 475

assimilating Muslim minorities is a distinctly modern phenomenon. Much like modernists views nationalism as a response to the singular difficulties of modernity, nationalism in India and China is a response to contemporary issues which facilitate increased ethnic divisions. In attempts to achieve regional, and eventually, global hegemony, both nations prioritized aggressive growth in their economic, industrial, and military sectors over social cohesion. Additionally, both India and China expanded their territorial influences by exerting increasing control over autonomous regions, specifically the states of Kashmir and Xinjiang. As a result of these territorial encroachments, economic investments increased in conjunction with the migration of majority groups to Muslim minority regions. Subsequently, the influence of India and China increased within Asia and the global community, albeit at the expense of internal unity. The reconciliation of modern progress and traditional culture positively impacted the majority population while further subjugating the Muslim minorities. Ultimately, this divide continues to fuel majority nationalism at the expense of the Muslim minorities.

### **Legal Applications of Secularism and Communal Identity**

Both India and China's modern interpretations of nationalism draw influences from their respective histories. Their struggles during the twentieth century, specifically, impacts their contemporary nationalist policies. To many of its citizens, the British raj abandoned India's identity as a Hindu majority nation and formidable socio-political power in Asia during its tenure from 1858 until 1947. Following independence in 1947, India's founders sought to assert their burgeoning influence with a political system that could reflect their evolving values. The Indian republic would eliminate the perceived religious and cultural intolerances of the British raj. India's founders sought not only to afford themselves the freedoms lost under British colonial rule, but also to eradicate the fears of a majority hegemony by providing special status to

minorities.<sup>113</sup> They effectively combined Great Britain's example of parliamentary democracy and secularism with a distinctly Indian approach emphasizing the integration of a multicultural and multiethnic society with the Hindu majority. Additionally, India's founders maintained that democracy and secularism should not be seen as merely confined to the sphere of government and state, but also as the governing principle of collective life in society.<sup>114</sup> Ultimately, as the basis for governance, secularism has been critical to the success of Indian democracy.<sup>115</sup> By creating an institutionalized space for political, cultural, and religious expression, democracy and secularism became the cornerstones of Indian society and, thus protectors of Muslim communities.

Like modern India's origin narrative, a blend of traditional cultural identity, reaction to previous governmental structures, and modern secularism govern China. After the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1912, a brief period of Republicanism followed by increased influence from Western powers occurred. These events precipitated the need for a political structure which both acknowledged the singularity of the Chinese people and was a departure from the failures of the past. Specifically, the founders of the PRC emphasized a national identity heavily influenced by the Han majority's communal structure.<sup>116</sup> Influenced in part by the traditional Confucian emphasis on familial unity, the Han majority's communal structure also draws heavily upon modern China's political inspiration: the Soviet Union. The Chinese two-pronged strategy of containment and absorption of minority groups draws heavily from Josef Stalin's policies in the 1950s.<sup>117</sup> By containing the spread of minority group's independence and indoctrinating those

---

<sup>113</sup> Misra, 3.

<sup>114</sup> Nayak, 41.

<sup>115</sup> Lal, 306.

<sup>116</sup> Jianping, 176.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, 176.

groups into the broader national identity, the Soviet Union, and eventually China, created distinct communal identities. Lenin's view that the proletariat must consolidate minorities into the larger community, thus diminishing any separatist desires, also influenced this ideology.<sup>118</sup> Secession by minority political groups led to the destabilization and eventual dissolution of the Soviet Union from 1989-1991. This breakdown not only diminished the Soviet Union's global power, but also supported pre-existing fears in China that minority groups could eventually undermine national progress.<sup>119</sup> Thus, the Soviet Union inspired the political foundation of the PRC while also serving as a cautionary tale of the dangers of minority groups.

The prioritization of secularism and communal identity in India and China influences the implementation of these ideologies into law. India, specifically, enforces secularism via the Indian Constitution while reaffirming this synthetic identity through robust political discourse.<sup>120</sup> To support a secular political discourse, India has a lengthy history of prioritizing civic involvement and emphasizing multicultural unity. Following its independence in 1947, India guaranteed suffrage to all citizens regardless of gender, race, or religion. While India is predominantly Hindu, it has no official religion. Additionally, to effectively consolidate an ethnically diverse nation, India's founders organized states on linguistic grounds and granted considerable regional autonomy. To emphasize secularism, the Preamble of the Constitution describes India as a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic. Additionally, Articles 14-18 guarantee fundamental rights to all citizens, regardless of religion, while Articles 25-28 are the constitutional provisions that underpin the secularity of the Indian state.<sup>121</sup> Article 25, specifically, states that all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to

---

<sup>118</sup> Israeli, 911.

<sup>119</sup> Dreyer, 69.

<sup>120</sup> Tremblay, 927.

<sup>121</sup> Anwar, 42.

freely profess, practice, and propagate religion subject to public order, morality and health.<sup>122</sup>

While India attempts to regulate secularism on a national scale, they largely defer to regional states for implementation and enforcement of minority rights laws. Because India is ethnically diverse, each state applies its own regional biases or viewpoints to implementing minority protections. To ensure constitutional safeguards were in union with rapidly diverging provincial laws, the National Commission for Minorities Act in 1992 established a national body to ensure compliance. Although regional governments have been the primary arbitrators of minority relations since India's inception, the federal government plays a more significant role in enforcing Constitutional secularism in recent years.

Like India, China strives to combine its emphasis on secularism and communal identity with effective minority policies. Minority policies focus on ethnic groups, or *minzu*, vice religious affiliation. The policy's framework remains like Mao Zedong's initiatives in the 1950s to institutionalize the special status of *minzu*. To inspire eventual assimilation into the Han majority population, minority groups receive disproportionately high representation in political bodies, looser restrictions on family planning, and other benefits. Per the Chinese Constitution, each *minzu* is classified based on four criteria: common territory, language, economy, and psychological nature as manifested in common culture.<sup>123</sup> There are approximately 55 official recognized minority groups in China, with the largest having more than 15 million members.<sup>124</sup> Only in autonomous districts where they are registered, can *minzu* receive the benefits afforded to them. Coincidentally, China's migrant population is mainly ethnic minorities who abandoned their underfunded economically stagnant provinces in search of economic stability in Eastern

---

<sup>122</sup> Article 25, Indian Constitution.

<sup>123</sup> Yuan, 135.

<sup>124</sup> Postiglione, 259.

cities. Thus, minority policy is territorially bound.<sup>125</sup> Despite political protections, state propaganda for *huaxia zisun* (descendants of the Han nucleus) and *Huangdi* (the Yellow Emperor, mythical ancestor of Han) is widespread. By equating the Han majority to the authentic Chinese, ethnicity is politicized and used as a tool of the state.<sup>126</sup> The special status of minority groups combined with their economic disadvantages further separates them from the national consciousness of the majority Han population.

While the minority policies of India and China emphasize secularism, they also attempt to safeguard minority identities through legal safeguards. In India, the preservation of the autonomous regions populated by minority groups is one approach to ensure minority privileges. As the only Indian state with a Muslim majority population, Kashmir has a lengthy history of dynamic interactions with Hindu majority populations on the Indian subcontinent. Kashmir's geographic isolation and fertile topography ensure that the region is, unfortunately, habitually a divisive touchpoint for surrounding powers. Although Kashmir was a traditional regional center of Hindu culture, beginning in the 1300s it endured five centuries of Muslim rule which dramatically affected today's population demographics. Kashmir's annexation by the Indian states of Punjab and Jammu in 1819 and 1846, respectively, brought increased oversight and attention from the Indian political powers. After Kashmir supported Great Britain in the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the region came under the official jurisdiction of the British Raj. Following the partition of 1947, Kashmir was officially incorporated into the Indian nation-state via a United Nations ceasefire in 1949. While the Line of Control between India and Pakistan through the Kashmir Valley is a continual contention, Kashmir remains an autonomous state of India with constitutional rights befitting its unique status.

---

<sup>125</sup> Yuan, 154.

<sup>126</sup> Sautman, 17.

Since its inclusion in 1949, Kashmir's unique autonomous status has been safeguarded. Accommodating a distinct Kashmiri identity was the Indian Constitutional Assembly's guiding principle in 1950 when it approved the unique and asymmetric constitutional relationship of Kashmir through Article 370 of the Constitution.<sup>127</sup> Article 370 acknowledges Kashmir's political freedom, but it also emphasized secularism and, consequently, Muslim singularity within the Indian government. While governed by overarching federal laws, Kashmir experiences relative autonomy in its political life. Additionally, native residents of Kashmir are afforded employment and education benefits and are the only Indian citizens permitted to own land in the Kashmir Valley. Although the federal government initially believed that the Kashmiri Muslim population would freely and willingly accede to India when given the opportunity, *azadi* (freedom) movements are widespread. While India recognizes Kashmir's distinct cultural identity, it also asserts similarities based on their common secular, socialist, and democratic agendas.<sup>128</sup> Through Article 370's preservation of Kashmir's distinct culture and Muslim minority rights, the Indian government espouses secularism by specifically addressing the religions it supports.

Despite this emphasis preserving the autonomy of Kashmir and the distinct rights of the Muslim minority population, problems arise from the broadness of Indian legislation and its implications. Interestingly, the Indian Constitution neither defines the term "minority" nor provides sufficient elements to elaborate upon a test determining whether a particular group constitutes a minority.<sup>129</sup> The Indian government generally identifies minorities after instances of prejudice or injustice have already occurred. Despite the lack of methods to classify and identify

---

<sup>127</sup> Tremblay, 928.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, 930.

<sup>129</sup> Sinha, 366.

minority groups, an undeniable link exists between the state and minority populations through laws and social norms. For example, in 1985 in *Mohd. Ahmed Khan v. Shah Bano Begum* the Supreme Court ruled that Shah Bano had the right to financial support from her husband, who had divorced her after forty-three years when he took a second wife. While the Indian Criminal Code Section 125 requires husbands to pay maintenance to their wives, Shah Bano's husband claimed that because he divorced Shah Bano under Muslim Personal Law, he was not required to provide any financial assistance. By deciding in favor of Shah Bano, the Supreme Court effectively ruled that the Indian Criminal Code superseded any civil codes or regulations from religious groups.<sup>130</sup> Following widespread protests from the Muslim population, India's Parliament passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill, which prevented Muslim women from claiming alimony via Section 125. While the ruling impassioned other religious groups to seek governance by their respective personal laws, it also indicated a troubling and ambiguous legal relationship between the Indian government and minority groups.

Unfortunately, the ambiguity and inconsistency of the implementation of India's religious freedom laws are troubling for minority relations. Instead of providing a firm separation between religion and government, the Indian Constitution and numerous legal precedents create a 'relational neutrality' whereby the principle of private-public distinction and separation of religion from the political is neither accepted or rejected.<sup>131</sup> Attempts to codify secularism fall short through vague statutes and contradictory rulings that were intended to solidify the connection between organized religion and government. By deferring to individual states, the Indian federal government leaves the systems vulnerable to corruption, prejudice, and overall state inaction. In Kashmir, specifically, India's mismanagement of ethnonational demands

---

<sup>130</sup> Sinha, 368.

<sup>131</sup> Anwar, 47.



facilitated competition and corruption between central political elites and subnational ethnic elites.<sup>132</sup> The perceived exceptionalism of Muslim minorities to Indian law, especially in the cases of Kashmir and Shah Bano, fueled pre-existing discontent behind the guise of civic equality. Unfortunately, India's central failure is that it has democratic institutions but failed in democratic action.<sup>133</sup> Instead of fostering a united secular society, the inconsistent implementation of well-intentioned, albeit vague, statutes supported divisiveness between the Hindu majority and Muslim minority groups.

Like India's legal protections of Muslim minority groups breed discontent and separation from the greater Indian population, China's minority policies grant a special, albeit divisive, status to Uighurs. The Uighurs are the largest Muslim ethnic minority in China. Nearly two thirds of China's Muslims live in Northwestern China in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, roughly eight million.<sup>134</sup> Xinjiang, which translates to "New Territories" in Chinese, officially became a Chinese province in 1884. Prior to 1884, the Uighur people had experienced centuries of political and cultural freedom. Descended from the dozens of nomadic tribes in the Central Asian steppes, the Uighurs first entered the dynastic Chinese government's purview during the 600s as trade along the Silk Road increased. When the local nomadic populations began converting to Islam in the 800s, the region was dominated by independent Sufi Islamic city-states. After nearly a century of violent attempts to pacify Muslim warlords of the West, the Qing dynasty finally overthrew the region's last Muslim Khanate in 1759. The Qing's hands-off approach to the region empowered Muslim elites to dominate the region's political life. An independent government was even established by Yakub Beg in the capital city of Kashgar from

---

<sup>132</sup> Chima, 915-23.

<sup>133</sup> Nayak, 49.

<sup>134</sup> Jiangping, 148.

1820-1877. When the Qing dynasty collapsed in 1911, Xinjiang remained under the loose jurisdiction of the Republic of China via the authority of provincial warlords. In 1933 and from 1944-1949, two iterations of the independent state of Eastern Turkestan were established, thus supporting centuries of public endorsement for regional independence. Following the establishment of the PRC in 1949, CCP forces took control of Xinjiang in 1949 and inaugurated nearly a century of struggle to diminish the region's historic autonomy. Xinjiang's historic position as a strategic, yet relatively independent, frontier zone of countless Chinese governments conflicts with the CCPs contemporary attempts to limit the region's autonomy.

The Uighurs official recognition by the CCP as a minority nationality in 1955 ultimately provided little support for Xinjiang's integration into the larger Chinese state. This nationality designation not only masked tremendous regional and linguistic diversity, but it also arbitrarily included separate regional ethnic groups into the wider Uighur classification.<sup>135</sup> The CCPs attempts to safeguard minority populations—agricultural subsidies, lower school entrance exams standards, protected seats in local governing bodies--provided little redress for persistent economic and political inequalities. Perennially undeveloped, the ethnic groups of the Western territories suffered through the loss of economic support during the Great Leap Forward and the demonization of their cultural heritage during the Cultural Revolution. As a result of growing economic disparities between the Han Chinese and minority groups as well as their relative isolation in underdeveloped Western territories, religious affiliation and regional heritage rather than citizenship to the Chinese state became driving factors in many Uighur's identities.<sup>136</sup> The independence of former Soviet Union satellite states in Central Asia in 1991 reinvigorated

---

<sup>135</sup> Dru C. Gladney, "Islam in China: Accommodation or Separatism?" *The China Quarterly*, no. 174 (2003): 457, accessed March 25, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/20059003](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20059003).

<sup>136</sup> Yuan, 154.

largely latent Uighur independence movements calling for the establishment of Eastern Turkestan. Simultaneously, contemporary Uyghur separatists look back to the brief periods of independent self-rule under Yakub Beg and the Eastern Turkestan Republics, in addition to the earlier glories of the Uyghur autonomous city-states, as evidence of their rightful claims to the region.<sup>137</sup> While Xinjiang's geographic isolation allowed a semblance of peace and cultural preservation in the 1970s-1980s, the region's exclusion from the era's economic modernization steadily fomented resentment. Despite the Uighur's minority protections under Chinese law, their economic, political, and social separation from the Han majority steadily increased throughout the twentieth century,

While geographical isolation bred relative peace for the Uighur's until the 1990s, the central government's attempts to remedy ethnic inequality paradoxically threatened the Uighur's singular political status and bred societal discontent. To address the ever-growing economic disparities between majority groups in Eastern cities and minority groups in Western provinces, the PRC leadership announced the Great Western Development plan, or *xibu da kaifa*, in 1999. As the gateway to the energy resources of Central Asia, Xinjiang was central to China's long-term development goals. By 2006, the government spent nearly one trillion yuan (\$125 billion) building infrastructure in Xinjiang, contributing to an annual average regional economic growth rate of 10.6 percent.<sup>138</sup> Additionally, by 2008, the central government supplied nearly 53% of Xinjiang's budget.<sup>139</sup> The 1994 tax reform set the precedence for this unprecedented involvement of the central government. Provincial bargaining power decreased in return for autonomy in local taxation which was ultimately contingent upon revenue from the central government; Western

---

<sup>137</sup> Gladney, 457.

<sup>138</sup> Van Wie Davis, 19.

<sup>139</sup> Sautman, 13.

provinces lacked the bargaining power necessary to dictate how much funding they received and where it could be used. Indifferent to the true scope of reforms necessary to remedy ethnic inequality, the Western Development Plan was a distributive initiative of the central government for only the central government's issues.<sup>140</sup> Politically, the Western Development Plan provided a platform not only to monitor ethnic separatists, but also to sway regional sentiment toward the CCP through economic incentivization and embedding pro-Party personnel in prominent positions in government and industry. The Western Development Plan benefitted the central government rather than the Uighur's of Xinjiang.

While economically successful, the Western Development Plan facilitated the further degradation of relations between the CCP and the Muslim Uighur minority group. Rather than correcting regional imbalances, the Western Development Plan took on strategies and projects that increasingly strengthened only select border regions and their peoples.<sup>141</sup> Additionally, the migration of Han Chinese to Xinjiang to take advantage of economic development only reinforced the Muslim minority status. Between 1953 and 2006, the Han Chinese population of Xinjiang increased from 6.1 percent to 40.6 percent.<sup>142</sup> The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC)—administrative coordinator of all development projects in the region—reserved 800 of 840 civil servant jobs for Han Chinese.<sup>143</sup> Unfortunately, many native Uighur's were unqualified to fill the high-level jobs the development projects brought to the region and the CCP failed to fund training or education programs. As industry in Xinjiang grew, Uighur's were even pushed out of their traditional agricultural realms. For example, in June 2004, a new reservoir and hydropower station along the Tekas River caused widespread protests

---

<sup>140</sup> Jeong, 7.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>142</sup> Hasmath, 125.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, 125.

when authorities forcibly removed 18,000 farmers, workers, and herders but only compensated 880 (about \$100) of the 38,800 yuan (\$4600) promised to them.<sup>144</sup> Ultimately, the unequal and corrupt execution of the Western Development Plan both further subjugated Uighurs to their minority status and facilitated widespread discontent.

### **Political Crises of Muslim Minorities in Kashmir and Xingjiang**

The inconsistent implementation of Muslim minority protections in India led to an increase in nationalist sentiments, specifically from the prominent political group Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Steadily increasing their power since the 1980s, the BJP maintains that the allocation of privileges by India's legal system is grossly misused by minorities. Because the government's preferential treatment induces separateness, Muslim minorities are creating a nation within the Indian State.<sup>145</sup> The notion of a divided Indian state opposes its inherent identity as a Hindu nation, they posit. The BJP draws heavily upon the Hindutva ideology, or the belief that Hindus are united around a common culture which forms a basis for the Indian nation.<sup>146</sup> Begun in 1925 to spread Hindu culture, Hindutva quickly transformed from a cultural outreach program to a foundational ideology of the Hindu nationalist movement. By tying culture to race, the BJP makes it possible to define a "pure" nation, albeit only within the confines of Hinduism.<sup>147</sup> The BJP effectively capitalizes upon fears of Muslim insurgencies in a post 9/11 world, historic ambitions to regain control of Kashmir, and discontent over the widening wealth disparities between majority and minority groups to gain support. Kashmir, specifically, serves as a convenient microcosm of the BJP's fears of the loss of Hindu majority culture to the Muslim minority. Ultimately, by defining entrance into the Hindu nation with a

---

<sup>144</sup> Van Wie Davis, 21.

<sup>145</sup> Misra, 12.

<sup>146</sup> Sajjad, 23.

<sup>147</sup> Kamat and Mathew, 9.

territorially contained notion of culture, the BJP can denote some minorities within the ambit of Hinduism, but the rest as foreigners.<sup>148</sup>

The strongest supporter of the BJP's rhetoric is Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Prior to assuming the role of Prime Minister, Modi was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, an underdeveloped Western state, from 2000-2014. In March 2002, Muslim extremists set fire to a train with Hindu nationalists onboard who were returning from a pilgrimage, killing 58. Coincidentally, the pilgrims were returning from Ayodhya where riots in 1992 took thousands of lives over the disputed Babri Masjid mosque which was allegedly built upon a sacred Hindu site. Following the train massacre, Modi declared the incident the work of Muslim militants and displayed the victims' bodies in Ahmedabad, the capital city. Nearly two thousand citizens, most of them Muslim, perished in the riots that followed.<sup>149</sup> Despite the carnage, Modi's involvement in the riots was both applauded by BJP hardliners and forgotten by the general public. In 2002, Modi's positive public profile drew investments to Gujarat who saw their growth rate jump to 12% in 2006, nearly double the national average.<sup>150</sup> Despite the previous carnage in Gujarat and the inability of Modi's administration to prosecute any offenders, Modi's economic successes in Gujarat propelled him to the national stage.

Elected as Prime Minister in 2014, Modi advocated for BJP's Hindutva agenda on a national scale. For example, he strengthened requirements for the building of new mosques and madrassas in 2014, tasked the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) with revising textbooks "to highlight Indian achievements and glorify Hindu tradition," and supported policy initiatives to reclaim mosques which were built over Hindu temples during

---

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>149</sup> Anand Teltumbde. "Gujarat 2002 and Modi's Misdeeds." *Economic and Political Weekly* 47, no. 11 (2012): 10, accessed March 22, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/23214644](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23214644).

<sup>150</sup> Teltumbde, 11.

Mughal rule.<sup>151</sup> In addition to promoting revisionist history, the BJP under Modi also eradicated the autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir. In August of 2019, the BJP controlled legislative body approved a suspension of Articles 370 and 35A of the constitution. Redesignated as union territories, non-Kashmiri's may now purchase land and both states are subject to federal jurisdiction. While the BJP touts these changes as essential to decreasing the economic disparities between autonomous states and the rest of India, they will also lead to demographic changes in the predominantly Muslim region. Now that non-Kashmiris may purchase land in the Kashmir Valley, the BJP is one step closer to uniting the region with the rest of India. Under Modi, the BJP has been singularly dedicated to systematically eradicating the protections afforded to Muslims both in Kashmir and throughout India.

Much like the BJP's nationalism under Modi highlights the importance of India's Hindu identity, the CCP's current brand of nationalism emphasizes the prestige of the Han majority. An essential modality for the CCP to assert the distinction of the Han majority is through the promotion of traditional Chinese values, specifically, Confucianism. Since Xi Jinping's tenure at the Party's leadership, the CCP has gradually positioned Confucianism to the forefront of the national consciousness. Like Prime Minister Modi appeals to the majority population's cultural and religious ties to Hinduism, Xi Jinping similarly attempts to assert national unity through espousing the importance of preserving the majority population's cultural narrative. The state's interest in Confucianism is simple: Confucianism offers an instant made-in-China value system with a long track record of holding the country together<sup>152</sup> A core facet of Chinese dynastic life for over a thousand years, Confucianism emphasized the importance of familial obligations, hierarchical structures, and reverence to the rule of law, its subsequent ruler and the government

---

<sup>151</sup> Lal, 311.

<sup>152</sup> Ian Johnson. *The Souls of China: The Return to Religion after Mao*. (New York: Vintage Books, 2016), 354-55.

it supported. The Nationalist government's focus on nation-building and modernization combined with the Chairman Mao era-antagonism toward traditional culture as a threat to the perennial revolution meant that twentieth century China largely neglected Confucianism. Xi Jinping, however, proclaims Confucianism's lasting vitality and significant contributions to human civilization as a whole.<sup>153</sup> The CCPs current brand of Confucianism is a stripped-down, simplified version that emphasizes hierarchy and obligation to those above.<sup>154</sup> In addition to including Confucianism in school curriculums, government propaganda campaigns, and media representations, the CCP supports a global organization of language schools known as Confucius Institutes. Through the resurgence of Confucianism, the CCP effectively masks the empowerment of the Han Chinese majority population with support for CCP-fabricated traditional Chinese culture.

While the CCPs recent affinity for Confucianism correlates to their desire to empower Han Chinese notions of cultural history, the Party also employs traditional Confucianism's prioritization of social harmony and cohesion in their recent quest for national unity. In his address to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2017, Xi touts the importance of a patriotic united front: "we must uphold the banner of patriotism and socialism, strive to achieve great unity and solidarity, balance commonality and diversity."<sup>155</sup> The great unity and solidarity Xi envisions is contingent upon societal harmony. China must staunchly oppose all attempts to split the nation or undermine its ethnic unity and social harmony and

---

<sup>153</sup> Xi Jinping. "Xi Jinping's Speech in Commemoration of the 2,565<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Confucius' Birth," Qufu, China: September 24, 2014, accessed May 5, 2021, <http://library.chinausfocus.com/article-1534.html>

<sup>154</sup> Johnson, 355.

<sup>155</sup> Xi Jinping. "Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era." 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. Beijing, China: October 18, 2017, accessed March 20, 2020, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/download/Xi\\_Jinping's\\_report\\_at\\_19th\\_CPC\\_National\\_Congress.pdf](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/download/Xi_Jinping's_report_at_19th_CPC_National_Congress.pdf).



stability.<sup>156</sup> Because Xi's ambitious vision for China's future is contingent upon the notion of a united Chinese state, any threats to unity are viewed as threats to the security and stability of the nation. From the state's perspective, a heightened religious consciousness among its citizens, especially Muslim Uighurs, can lead to dissent if improperly managed.<sup>157</sup> If instability occurs in Xinjiang, it could quickly inspire separatism and instability in other contentious regions such as Tibet, Inner Mongolia, and Taiwan. To subvert possible insurrection, the CCP effectively includes Muslim minority groups like the Uighurs into Xi's vision of a united Chinese society only if they acquiesce to the majority's will, via adherence to CCP directives.

Unfortunately, thus far Muslim minority groups such as the Uighurs appear to be forgotten in the scope. Not only did the Western Development Plan disproportionately benefit Han Chinese migrants, but it also bred significant resentment among the Uighur population. The consequences of heightened ethnoreligious consciousnesses in an unequal society brought two realities: a struggle between the dominant state and oppressed minority group as well as conflict due to intense competition for resources and opportunities.<sup>158</sup> These conflicts first converged in 1990 at the Baren Township riots. After the closure of mosques that was allegedly built without proper governmental permission, Uighurs protested throughout Southern Xinjiang and nearly three thousand individuals were killed.<sup>159</sup> In the Summer of 2009, a dispute between Uighur and Han workers at a toy factory resulted in the deaths of seven hundred Uighurs and incited a protest in Urumqi resulting in thousands of injuries for both Uighur and Han citizens.<sup>160</sup> Deadly incidents between Uighur's and Han Chinese in Xinjiang continued to escalate throughout the

---

<sup>156</sup> Xi Jinping, "Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era."

<sup>157</sup> Hasmath, 123.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid, 134.

<sup>159</sup> Dreyer, 72.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, 73.

2000s, thus supporting the fears of the central government that instability in Xinjiang could be contagious.

To halt the spread of violence in Xinjiang, the CCP increased its presence in the region. Not only did they continue to incentivize Han migration to Xinjiang from Eastern cities, but the CCP also increased PLA coverage and appointed a new, stricter, district party chief. Instead of easing tensions, these changes angered the already subjugated Uighur population and in 2014, violence escalated. In March 2014 at the Kunming Railway Station, eight Uighur men and women attacked train passengers with knives, killing thirty-one and injuring another 140. Two months later another knife attack and bombing occurred at the Urumqi Railway station killing three and injuring seventy-nine.<sup>161</sup> Following these attacks, the CCP began detaining Uighurs at unprecedented levels under the mandates of the “Strike Hard Campaign Against Violent Terrorism.” To limit further separatist momentum in Xinjiang, the CCP employed the principle of preventive policing to encourage officials to be suspicious, hyper-vigilant, and proactive against any suspicious activity.<sup>162</sup> Under the guise of a vocational education and training program, Xinjiang’s Governor Shorhat Zakir announced a quasi-legal framework for internments to “get rid of the environment and soil that breeds terrorism and religious extremism.”<sup>163</sup> According to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, around one million Uighurs and others have disappeared into these camps with no clarity about when

---

<sup>161</sup> Gerry Groot. "Internment and Indoctrination--Xi's 'New Era' in Xinjiang." In *Power*, edited by Golley Jane, Jaivin Linda, Farrelly Paul J., and Strange Sharon, Acton ACT, Australia: ANU Press, 2019: 102, accessed March 25, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvfrxqkv](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvfrxqkv).14.

<sup>162</sup> Groot, 103.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid, 108.

they might be released.<sup>164</sup> The mistreatment of Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang is indicative of a broader national fixation on unity and harmony as a catalyst for societal advancement.

### **Conclusion**

The parallel experiences of Muslims in India and China represent broader nationalist themes in both nations. Both India and China have crafted distinct nationalist agendas both as a response to their contemporary issues and to build a foundation for their future goals. As a result of the modern phenomena of traumatic global conflicts, political reorganizations, rapid industrialization, and cultural transformations, both India and China developed unique, modern, and government-manufactured interpretations of nationalism. India views its successes as a modern, secular and democratic state as both an inspiration to its neighbors and a check on authoritarianism while also promoting the formation of a cooperative, peaceful and law governed region.<sup>165</sup> Yet, the Indian government's historical mistreatment of Muslim minorities, current disregard for safeguarding minority protections, and evolving affiliation with the Hindutva ideology undermine any attempts at domestic cohesion. The BJP's political agenda attempts to codify that national stability and power are contingent upon the Hindu majority's empowerment. Effectively, the BJP fabricates an inconsistent and inaccurate political narrative where national unity must be achieved, even at the detriment of India's minority populations. Like India, China also places development, harmony, and cohesion above democratic values and strives to use its internal stability as a catalyst for regional influence.<sup>166</sup> The CCP perpetuates a nationalist narrative influenced by selective interpretations of Confucianism where the Han majority alone

---

<sup>164</sup> "Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reviews the report of China," United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, August 13, 2018, accessed March 15, 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23452&LangID=E>.

<sup>165</sup> Jha, 66.

<sup>166</sup> Andrew F. Cooper, and Asif B. Farooq. "The Advocacy of Democratic Governance by India and China: Patterns of Consistency/Inconsistency between Declaratory and Operational Practices." *India Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (2015): 225, accessed February 24, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/45072755](http://www.jstor.org/stable/45072755).

can secure China's domestic stability and national unity. Through their restrictive and coercive policies in Xinjiang, the CCP indirectly labels the Uighurs as impediments to internal peace and political prosperity. The gradual curtailment of the political rights of Muslim minorities and the empowerment of each nation's respective majority populations supports a modern nationalist narrative that is both invented by India and China's political powers and contradictory to their foundational narratives. If these nationalist agendas founded upon assumptions of cultural supremacy persist and both nations continue to amass regional influence, their global influence on minority rights policies is likely. The social implications of a future global hegemony by India or China warrant an in-depth review of each nation's minority rights policies, especially considering their present treatment of Muslim minority groups in Kashmir and Xinjiang.

In India and China, a nationalistic fervor—grounded upon a desire for regional or ultimately global influence—has overtaken each nation's core political principles. Each nation's similar historical origins in the twentieth century, inconsistent attempts to codify minority rights, pre-eminent national figures and their respective political parties both construct problematic agendas regarding their Muslim minority populations. The present experience of Muslim minority groups in Kashmir and Xinjiang are precarious examples of unchecked modern and state-centric constructivist nationalism. India's BJP champions the Hindu majority through an aggressive agenda of curbing Muslim Kashmiri rights. In China, the CCP employs revisionist history and re-education to eliminate the Uighur's distinct cultural identity. As India and China continue to gain prominence in both Asia and the global community, their efforts to unify their populations as a pretext for internal stability will invariably increase. In the future, India and China's efforts to limit Muslim minority rights for nationalistic ambitions could be transposed to

other facets of society. Thus, an understanding of each nation's nationalist identities is imperative to assessing their potential influence on the world order.

## Chapter 4

# Destabilizing the China Dream: Nationalism and Domestic Corruption in China

Although corruption may be a ubiquitous, integral, even expected part of most political systems,<sup>167</sup> as Andrew Wedeman writes, it is particularly prevalent in China. China's transformation into a formidable world power has ironically coincided with perpetuating a historic, albeit dangerous, corruption cycle. The idea of *guanxi*, or the reciprocity of personal relationships, is the foundation of many economic, political, and social aspects of Chinese life. While *guanxi* fortifies a cultural acceptance of corrupt practices, China's rapid transformation to a market economy further solidifies the prevalence of corruption as an avoidable characteristic of life in contemporary China. Under the leadership of Xi Jinping, the CCP exerts significant resources on anticorruption campaigns and reforms to alter this societal propensity towards corruption. Despite these reforms, Xi Jinping's distinct brand nationalism facilitates increases in domestic corruption. Specifically, Xi Jinping's monopoly of the CCP ensures they promote his narrative of modern and state-centric constructivist nationalism, which empowers the majority Han Chinese population to achieve lofty economic, and subsequently political, goals. The achievement of these goals will both remedy China's historic misfortunes and secure its future position as a global hegemony. In the CCP's estimation, as a future global hegemony, China must fortify the authority of the central government at all costs.

---

<sup>167</sup> Wedeman, "Great Disorder under Heaven," 24.

While China's rise in ranks of the international community appears unrestrained by current corruption levels and the CCP's nationalist agenda, the long-term effects of this cultural corruption are undetermined. China's cultural acceptance of corruption combined with the consequences of its rapid transition to a market economy, the inconsistent application of anticorruption reforms and the pervasive influence of the CCP under Xi Jinping's singular ideology supports a national culture where corruption is both expected and rewarded. In analyzing the relationship between corruption and Xi Jinping's nationalist agenda, this paper will highlight a variety of factors in four sections. First, I will provide an overview on corruption studies and China's rankings within the international community. Second, I will examine the impact of China's historic relationship with corruption. Third, I will discuss the implications of Xi Jinping's anticorruption campaigns. Fourth, I will analyze Xi Jinping's modern and state-centric constructivist nationalist agenda through an investigation of his public remarks and high visibility government programs. Ultimately, examining the connection between Chinese corruption levels and the CCP's nationalist agenda under the helm of Xi Jinping's leadership affords an essential understanding of China's cultural past, its present difficulties, and its future global aspirations.

### **Corruption Studies and Metrics**

Corruption analysis is a field of study plagued by inherent difficulties. Most nations are generally unwilling to expose the breadth of their systematic or institutionalized corruption purely for academic study. Perceptions of corruption can adversely affect a nation's reputation not only domestically but also within the international community. In most countries, there is a latency period in reporting from when the corrupt offense took place and when it was reported to authorities. Specifically, China experienced an increase in its average latency period during the

economic transition in the 1980s.<sup>168</sup> The “hiddenness gap”—when corrupt events are exposed to the general public—and the “sensitivity gap”—when information is available to the academic community—challenging environment for both corruption scholars and political reformers alike.<sup>169</sup> In some nations, corruption can be more rampant than officially recorded due to societal acceptance (or resignation) of corruption’s influence. Similarly, if the public does not see corruption as a direct threat to improving its socio-economic well-being,<sup>170</sup> corruption can be perceived as a necessary, albeit unfortunate, component of modern life. Inadequate legislation or government processes to prosecute offenders or the fear of political or economic retribution for reporting corruption both beget difficulties in studying corruption. Undoubtedly, corruption in most nations exists well beyond the scope captured in published analysis.

Despite the inherent challenges of corruption studies, there are well-respected international and regional organizations that focus on this field of study. The leading global organization for tracking and analyzing corruption metrics, Transparency International (TI), habitually quantifies China's seemingly unbridled corruption. TI employs two ranking mechanisms: the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB). The annual CPI ranks countries based on their perceived level of corruption in the public sector by experts and business executives. The roughly bi-annual GCB—touted by TI as the most extensive public opinion survey on corruption—analyzes a local population's assessment of corruption. In the most recent CPI in 2019, China’s score of 41 out of 100 (100 is very clean, 0 is highly corrupt) and ranking of 80 out of 180 nations reviewed<sup>171</sup> is a testament to its

---

<sup>168</sup> Guo, 360.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, 350.

<sup>170</sup> Wedeman. "Great Disorder under Heaven," 21.

<sup>171</sup> “Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2019,” Report. Transparency International, 2019: 2, accessed February 10, 2020, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2019/index/nzl#>.



institutionalized corruption. Since TI's inception, China's CPI score consistently fails to reach the top half of the 31 nations in the Asia Pacific, and its CPI ranking has never surpassed the 2018 level of 87.<sup>172</sup> Similarly, the most recent GCB in 2017 identified China as the most corrupt country in the Asia-Pacific region. An astonishing 73 percent of respondents believed that corruption had increased in China within the last two years.<sup>173</sup>

While TI analyzes nations globally, the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) organization examines corruption in business and politics throughout Asia. The PERC ranks countries on a scale of 0 to 10 (1 is very clean, 10 is highly corrupt). Since the 1990s, China consistently ranks in the latter half of corrupt nations in Asia. For example, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, China's score vacillated between a 7.3 in 1995 (tied with India for the most corrupt nation in Asia) to a 9.0 in 2003.<sup>174</sup> From 2009-2018, China's score reached a high of only 6.55 in 2017 before averaging at 7.08.<sup>175</sup> While some scholars argue that PERC data could be exaggerated due to a lack of comparison, China's consistent dismal representation is a testament to its relatively corrupt international persona. Additionally, because the PERC provides insights into certain biases that might distinguish how executives in one country differ from those in another country,<sup>176</sup> it is a useful metric to assess high-level corruption. Corruption at the highest echelons of business and politics in China is a frequent source for political commentary, public dismay, and academic research. Ultimately, the widespread perceptions of corruption in China both from the regional and international communities indicate corruption's significance in Chinese life.

---

<sup>172</sup> "Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2018." Report. Transparency International, 2018: 3, accessed February 10, 2020, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2018/index/dnk>.

<sup>173</sup> "Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2018," 3.

<sup>174</sup> Wedeman, "Great Disorder Under Heaven," 15.

<sup>175</sup> "Asian Intelligence: An Independent Report on Asian Business and Politics." Political and Economic Risk Consultancy, March 28, 2018, accessed October 20, 2020. <http://www.asiarisk.com/subscribe/exsum1.pdf>

<sup>176</sup> "Asian Intelligence: An Independent Report on Asian Business and Politics," 2.

## Historic Sources of Corruption in Chinese Society

A notable characteristic of Chinese corruption is the idea of *guanxi*, or the reciprocity of personal relationships. *Guanxi* is paramount to China's distinctive Confucian bureaucratic culture centered on the rule of man rather than the rule of law.<sup>177</sup> Politicians, entrepreneurs, or any citizens of influence cultivate *guanxi* networks to fulfill professional and personal needs. Financial investments, political appointments, construction permits, and even school admissions are invariably influenced by one's *guanxi* network or lack thereof. Not only do successful *guanxi* networks enrich the lives of its members, but they also serve as a practical tool for self-preservation. The importance of maintaining *mianzi*, or face, among network members often results in diverting punishment (unjustly) onto individuals outside the network. The resilience of *guanxi* networks stems from their ability to exist within the infrastructure of Chinese society. Although *guanxi* networks began as informal institutions, they subsequently substituted and complemented formal rules to eventually subvert new formal institutions.<sup>178</sup> By thriving within the Chinese society's foundations, *guanxi* is an accepted, albeit unfortunate, fundamental characteristic of life in China.

*Guanxi* networks, and the corruption they support, maintain their influence in China due in part to the complicit support of Chinese society. These networks prove themselves to be resilient and timeless characteristics of Chinese culture.<sup>179</sup> In imperial China, the misappropriation of public funds was an acceptable practice because it was assumed that public officials had the right and public authority to do so.<sup>180</sup> As China's economy fluctuated, many

---

<sup>177</sup> Broadhurst and Wang, 164.

<sup>178</sup> Wang, 812.

<sup>179</sup> Broadhurst and Wang, 165.

<sup>180</sup> Ko and Weng, 734.

citizens viewed corruption as a necessary income supplement within the *guanxi* gift economy.<sup>181</sup> Because of its importance throughout history, some citizens are resigned to accept *guanxi* networks and the corruption they support. In response to the suicide and subsequent corruption case of Beijing Vice Mayor Wang Baosen and his associate Chen Xitong in 1995 Andrew Wedeman writes, “the public appeared to accept Wang Baosen’s suicide and Chen Xitong’s sacking with a combination of apathy and irony. Most Beijing residents assumed Wang and Cheng were corrupt because they believed most senior cadres and their families have dirty hands.”<sup>182</sup> Undoubtedly, the difficulties of enforcing reforms within the entrenched bureaucracy of the CCP or redefining cultural norms also supports the continued influence of *guanxi* networks. However, the profound ambivalence that the Chinese have about *guanxi* is perhaps a more powerful force in supporting its prevalence.<sup>183</sup>

In addition to *guanxi* networks, corruption in contemporary China also stems from the consequences of its rapid transition to a market economy. Although economic scarcities rooted in China’s central planning did create incentives for bureaucratic abuse in the era of Mao Zedong,<sup>184</sup> reported corruption levels remained relatively constant until the reform era. Following the Cultural Revolution, the government loosened economic regulations to support growth at the local level. Because public officials gained increased control over scarce resources (land, capital, business), they also had abundant opportunities for corruption via rent-seeking.<sup>185</sup> Local governments also could collect taxes and raise expenditures at their discretion through

---

<sup>181</sup> Manion, 96.

<sup>182</sup> Wedeman, "Corruption and Politics," 84.

<sup>183</sup> Pye, 45.

<sup>184</sup> Yan Sun and Baishun Yuan, “Does Xi Jinping’s Anticorruption Campaign Improve Regime Legitimacy?” *Modern China Studies* 24, no. 2 (July 2017): 18, accessed March 15, 2020, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=123766301&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

<sup>185</sup> Ko and Weng, 721.

fiscal sharing. Provincial governments accounted for a remarkable 71.7% of government expenditures and revenue from 1990-1995,<sup>186</sup> a clear indication of government abuse. As local authorities extracted increasing rents, high-ranking party officials similarly took advantage of growing markets. The explosion of corruption during the 1980s and 1990s was a policy outcome of economic reforms.<sup>187</sup> The government limited their oversight of state-owned enterprises while simultaneously minimally regulating private businesses, a relative novelty in the decades past's highly disciplined Chinese economy. Thus, increased economic freedoms with limited oversight guaranteed increased corruption.

While the economy of China developed quickly, methods to classify and regulate corruption advanced slowly. Both legislation and administrative bodies to investigate or prosecute corruption cases did not develop until the 1970s. In 1979 the Chinese Criminal Law defined only three types of corruption—embezzlement, bribery, neglect of duty—without stipulating punishments until a 1997 revision. Gradually, both corruption laws and official reports of corruption increased. For example, in 1998, 249 laws and regulations were used to control bribery in China, and in 2007, there were 542.<sup>188</sup> Official reports of corruption cases also rose from 89,000 in 1979 to over 243,000 in 1990.<sup>189</sup> Currently, state officials' non-criminal corruption cases are reviewed by the Ministry of Supervision while the CCP's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) vets cases concerning party members. The People's Procuratorate investigates criminal corruption cases of all citizens. Inside China, the low number of reports and the gradual development of effective legislation indicates that corruption is perceived as an unavoidable, albeit unfortunate, aspect of society.

---

<sup>186</sup> Ko and Weng, 721.

<sup>187</sup> Manion, 93.

<sup>188</sup> Ko and Weng, 719.

<sup>189</sup> Wedeman, "Great Disorder Under Heaven," 6.

While the legislative and administrative specificities of China's anticorruption infrastructure is still evolving, this infrastructure relies upon a single ideology: the superiority of the CCP. The institutional design of the PRC gives primacy to the Communist Party, which invariably influences the organizational procedures and regulations of the anticorruption efforts.<sup>190</sup> For example, the CCDI must gain approval from the Politburo Standing Committee prior to investigating high-level cases. When the case involves a Politburo member, a unanimous consensus from current and previous committee members is required. Undoubtedly, these members are protected by both Party allegiances and extensive *guanxi* networks. The head of the CCDI's local body—the Committees for Disciplinary Inspection (CDI)—is also part of the provincial Party networks and similarly plagued by allegiance to the CCP and their respective *guanxi* networks.<sup>191</sup> Interestingly, the CCDI investigates significantly more cases than the Procuratorate, which only prosecutes criminal conduct. For example, in 2014 the CCDI investigated 232,000 cases while the Procuratorate filed 41,500.<sup>192</sup> Many cases are held at the CCDI level indefinitely, pending party investigations, and may never reach the Procuratorate. While efforts to shield its members from public scrutiny may be common in many large organizations, any specific attempts to conceal, contain, or ignore corruption within the CCP's ranks bolsters *guanxi* networks' power and solidifies corruption's intrinsic value in Chinese society.

### **Xi Jinping's Anticorruption Reforms**

---

<sup>190</sup> Macabre Keliher and Hsinchao Wu, "Corruption, Anticorruption, and the Transformation of Political Culture in Contemporary China," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 1 (2016): 11, accessed October 21, 2020, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24738508>.

<sup>191</sup> Keliher and Wu, 11.

<sup>192</sup> Andrew Wedeman. "Xi Jinping's Tiger Hunt: Anti-Corruption Campaign or Factional Purge?" *Modern China Studies* 24, no. 2 (July 2017): 48.

During his first speech to the Politburo upon assuming the role of General Secretary of the CCP in November 2012, Xi Jinping warned: “if corruption becomes increasingly serious, it will inevitably doom the party and the state.”<sup>193</sup> By beginning his tenure with an ambitious initiative to re-define the relationship between Chinese society and corruption, Xi Jinping's anticorruption reforms reflect the boldness of his leadership style and his administration's policy goals. Xi Jinping's anticorruption campaigns are the largest and longest campaigns in the history of the CCP. Previous anticorruption campaigns—held every two years since the reform period in 1982—were largely ineffective. These *yanda* (strike hard) anticorruption strategies can help new leaders to establish their authority throughout the country, but such campaigns have not, in the long run, curbed corruption, advanced transparency or heightened legitimacy within the Chinese state.<sup>194</sup> With only 677,924 cases brought against corrupt cadres throughout the late twentieth century, these campaigns led to a routinization of anticorruption efforts.<sup>195</sup> In contrast, Xi Jinping's anticorruption campaigns target high ranking cadre and provincial officials and catalyze institutional change. To ensure his campaigns avoid the routinization of previous efforts, Xi Jinping's administration also targets “naked officials” (*luogoan*, whose spouses and children have emigrated overseas with funds borne of corruption), state-owned enterprise officials, and senior military members.<sup>196</sup> Xi Jinping's anticorruption campaigns are high-minded assaults on both the elite CCP members and the average citizens who support China's corruption cycle.

In addition to broadening the sections of Chinese society it affects, Xi Jinping's anticorruption reforms also alter the existing anticorruption infrastructure. Various reforms include creating inspection teams to monitor provincial-level officials, granting additional legal

---

<sup>193</sup> Keliher and Wu, 5.

<sup>194</sup> Broadhurst and Wang, 157.

<sup>195</sup> Keliher and Wu, 9.

<sup>196</sup> Heberer, 88.

powers to the provincial inspection teams, and instituting a series of regulations that automatically trigger disciplinary action.<sup>197</sup> Additionally, the CCDI exhibits increased control in appointing local CDI leaders, all while under the centralized CCP anticorruption structure. Many scholars maintain that the goal of Xi Jinping's reforms—while helpful in tackling systematic corruption—is not an independent legal structure, but rather a more centralized system that is useful for supervising local authorities and increasingly independent from local interests.<sup>198</sup> By appointing local officials who are merely further extensions of the Party apparatus, Xi Jinping can consolidate support for both the CCP and its anticorruption initiatives. While the expanding powers of the CCDI assist in centralizing CCP authority, the National Supervision Commission (NSC) is another extension of the Party power structure. Created in 2017 with the Supervision Law, the NSC monitors all public servants, not just CCP members. With broader investigatory authorities than the CCDI and few legal constraints, the NSC reports directly to the CCP as the fourth branch of government. Ultimately, Xi Jinping's anticorruption reforms support the primacy of the CCP in monitoring, investigating, and prosecuting corruption cases.

As well as fortifying the primacy of the CCP, Xi Jinping's anticorruption reforms also revitalize the traditional mass campaign tactics of the Maoist era. During the early years of the PRC, since corruption was perceived as individual wrongdoing rather than as an institutional or systemic problem, people were mobilized in periodic rectification campaigns to report wrongdoing and criticize decadent thoughts and behavior.<sup>199</sup> While there have been numerous rectification campaigns of varying intensity throughout China's modern history, the rectification campaign of 2013 was the most well publicized. To tackle the evils of the Four Winds

---

<sup>197</sup> Keliher and Wu, 5.

<sup>198</sup> Heberer, 87.

<sup>199</sup> Hao and Johnston, 593.

(formalism, bureaucracy, hedonism, and waste), Xi Jinping's instituted an anticorruption rectification campaign under the tenants of the traditional Maoist model of self-purification, self-improvement, self-innovation, and self-awareness.<sup>200</sup> The connection of Maoist rhetoric to contemporary government initiatives—combined with the appointment of CCP loyalists in provincial CCDI positions—solidified widespread popularity and support for the rectification campaign. With the variety of reforms and reliance on traditional Maoist practices, Xi Jinping is both circumventing existing institutions and cautiously setting up a base, albeit a flimsy one, for new institutions to follow.<sup>201</sup> This amalgamation of the traditional practices and contemporary policies secures essential support for Xi Jinping's rectification campaign and his strategic objectives for the CCP.

While Xi Jinping's anticorruption campaigns consolidate popular support behind traditional Maoist rhetoric, they also admonish prominent Party figures. Although corruption is evident throughout Chinese society, in recent years, it is most visible within the highest ranks of the CCP. For example, in the last 30 years, 4.2 million high ranking officials were punished for corruption, with 660,000 from 2007-2012.<sup>202</sup> Under Xi Jinping's leadership, the CCP strives to discipline and expose corrupt leaders. Xu Caihou, the highest-ranking general of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Zhou Yongkang, a Politburo Standing Committee Member, were both convicted of corruption-related crimes from 2014-2015. Another notable corruption scandal involved Bo Xilai, the former Communist Party Chief of Chongqing. Once vetted for a position on the illustrious nine-member Politburo Standing Committee, Bo Xilai was publicly popular due to his Chongqing Model, specifically designed to combat corruption. Despite this promising

---

<sup>200</sup> Broadhurst, 170.

<sup>201</sup> Gueorguiev, 24-5.

<sup>202</sup> Li, 146-47.



career, he was sentenced to life imprisonment for taking RMB 20 million (\$3.3 million) in bribes and embezzling RMB 5M (\$817,000) from his time as mayor of Dalian from 1993-2000.<sup>203</sup> Simultaneously, Bo Xilai's wife Guo Xilai was sentenced to life in prison for assisting in the murder of a former business partner, Neil Haywood. Among the ranks of the CCP, corruption has become a source of periodic instability within the elite as the war on corruption claims an increasing number of politically sensitive victims.<sup>204</sup> Xu Caihou, Zhou Yongkang, Bo Xilai, and other disgraced public figures are touted as symbols of China's corrupt past who would have no place in the CCP's glorious future.

While the fallen leaders of Xi Jinping's tenure may be truly corrupt, they could also be mere casualties of the public's evolving opinion—and the CCP's evolving standards—on corruption. However, these fallen leaders were likely the fatalities of Xi Jinping's swift consolidation of power within the ranks of the CCP. Influential leaders whose popularity, ideology, or ambition threaten Xi Jinping's predominance within the CCP are usually victims of the rectification campaigns misaligned Maoist morality. For example, Bo Xilai's ambitious campaigning for a seat on the Politburo Standing Committee was a direct threat to the smooth succession of Xi Jinping as the newly selected General Party Secretary in 2012. Xu Caihou and Zhou Yongkang were revered government figures whose lengthy tenures and considerable wealth were antithetical to Xi Jinping's message of societal revitalization and global advancement without reliance on historical corruption. Thus, the rectification campaigns both affirm the traditional values of the CCP while also suggesting that Xi Jinping will continue to employ anticorruption initiatives to deal with resistance within the party.<sup>205</sup> Under Xi Jinping,

---

<sup>203</sup> Broadhurst and Wang, 162.

<sup>204</sup> Wedeman, "Corruption and Politics," 85.

<sup>205</sup> Broadhurst and Wang, 170.

the CCP's anticorruption campaign will inevitably remain an extralegal, party-led movement with Xi exerting absolute authority to silence any criticism.<sup>206</sup> The prosecution of high profile Party members supports both the efficacy of the anticorruption rectification campaigns and Xi Jinping's consolidation of power.

Unfortunately, the exposure of corruption at the highest levels of the CCP has a negligible effect on China's current corruption levels. The Chinese Armed Forces, previously seemingly immune to CCP political infighting, is the government's newest sector under increased corruption suspicion. As of November 2017, 82 generals and senior colonels had been detained or under investigation for corruption-related offenses.<sup>207</sup> In addition to infiltrating the Chinese military, corruption's large scale in China has also affected financial security. As of June 2013, 16,000-18,000 officials have fled China, taking approximately RMB 800 billion (\$130 billion).<sup>208</sup> To combat this continued financial strain and public disapproval, the CCP aggressively investigates and prosecutes corruption-related offenses. For example, in the first half of 2016, the CDIC conducted approximately 500,000 investigations.<sup>209</sup> Additionally, by mid-2017, 15,000 CCP members had received punishment for violations of anticorruption disciplines.<sup>210</sup> Despite the gravity of China's corruption and the CCP's substantial increase in corruption-related investigations and prosecutions, China remains one of the most corrupt nations in Asia and the world. Since Xi Jinping's tenure began in 2012, China's CPI scores have remained between 36 in 2016 and 41 in 2019.<sup>211</sup> While the current anticorruption campaigns have increased corruption reporting, the politicization of such efforts is undeniable.

---

<sup>206</sup> Li, 152.

<sup>207</sup> Wedeman, "Xi Jinping's Tiger Hunt," 64.

<sup>208</sup> Sun and Yuan, 19.

<sup>209</sup> Wedeman, "Xi Jinping's Tiger Hunt," 48.

<sup>210</sup> Li Ling. Politics of Anticorruption in China: Paradigm Change of the Party's Disciplinary Regime 2012-2017. *Journal of Contemporary China* 28, no. 115 (2019): 55.

<sup>211</sup> "Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2019," 2.

## **Xi Jinping's Nationalist Ideology**

In addition to serving as a valuable tool to consolidate power within the Party, Xi Jinping's anticorruption reforms also fortify the contemporary political narrative of the CCP. Specifically, the CCP's emphasis on the central government's authority—largely possible because of Xi Jinping's anticorruption initiatives—ensures that the Party continues to promote Xi Jinping's singular modernist and state-centric constructivist nationalism. To analyze the implications of this nationalism on corruption, an understanding of modernist and state-centric constructivist nationalism is imperative. To modernists, nationalism exists due to the shifting balances of power, industrialization, mass migrations, traumas of regional and global conflicts, and ideological shifts characteristic of only modernity. Although ethnic identity may still play a role in nationalism, nationalism is simply the result of the modern changes these ethnic identities experience. Modern nationalism reflects the basic social organization of the industrial world and industrializing people.<sup>212</sup> While state-centric constructivism also considers the influences of modernity on nationalism, it places greater emphasis on the modern nation-state's ability to influence the development of nationalist thought. Specifically, nationalism is a byproduct of the state's policies that create an artificial identity to support its broader political goals. The CCP under Xi Jinping blends modernist and state-centric constructivist nationalist ideologies to affirm the central government's authority and simultaneously remedy contemporary issues while supporting future aspirations.

Throughout Xi Jinping's public remarks, there is evidence of modern nationalism's influence on the political agenda of the CCP. Xi Jinping's political ethos and vision for China's future—also known as the China Dream—emphasizes the Chinese people's singularity and

---

<sup>212</sup> Gellner, 29.

establishes a narrative upon collective future ambitions. Stressing a theme of national humiliation, Xi Jinping has set a populist agenda that strikes large, even grandiose, hopes.<sup>213</sup> Upon assuming his role as General Secretary of the CCP in November 2012, Xi Jinping stated that “in the modern era, our nation experienced constant hardships and difficulties.”<sup>214</sup> After highlighting Chinese traumas in modernity, Xi Jinping inaugurated his ideology of societal rejuvenation; China must work “for realizing the great revival of the Chinese nation in order to let the Chinese nation stand more firmly and powerfully among all nations around the world and make a greater contribution to mankind.”<sup>215</sup> By addressing them in his first major address to the CCP, Xi Jinping establishes success over historical traumas and national rejuvenation as titular themes of his administration. In his address to the 19th National Congress in 2017, Xi Jinping re-emphasizes these themes while also touting the importance of a patriotic united front: “we must uphold the banner of patriotism and socialism, strive to achieve great unity and solidarity, balance commonality and diversity.”<sup>216</sup> Throughout his catalog of public remarks, Xi Jinping repeatedly emphasizes that the China Dream's fulfillment is contingent upon a stable and united society. While only possible with the central government's careful oversight, the China Dream's stable and united society will eventually remedy past traumas and prepare China for its illustrious future. Thus, from Xi Jinping's narrative, the China Dream is founded upon a distinct modern nationalist identity.

---

<sup>213</sup> Joseph Fewsmith. “Xi Jinping's Fast Start.” *China Leadership Monitor*, no. 41 (Spring 2013): 3, accessed October 10, 2020, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=asn&AN=91025653&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

<sup>214</sup> Xi Jinping. “Address of General Secretary Xi Jinping to the Politburo Standing Committee.” 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, November 15, 2012, accessed October 9, 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-20338586>

<sup>215</sup> Jinping. “Address of General Secretary Xi Jinping to the Politburo Standing Committee.”

<sup>216</sup> Xi Jinping, “Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.”

In many of Xi Jinping's public remarks, he characterizes corruption as the major impediment to achieving the China Dream of national rejuvenation. As the destabilizing force in both the CCP and Chinese society, corruption is the focal point of Xi Jinping's nationalist agenda. While addressing the 19th CCDI in January 2019, Xi Jinping called for developing a “sweeping victory” against corruption.<sup>217</sup> Illustrating the severity of the task at hand, Xi Jinping stated that “no place has been out of bounds, no ground left unturned and no tolerance shown in the fight against corruption.”<sup>218</sup> In addition to targeting political opponents, Xi Jinping also instituted limits on Party officials' spending and donations. This clampdown on “tigers” (senior officials) and “flies” (rank and file officials) by the CCP is a concentrated attempt to indicate that rising corruption does not signal a break-down in Party control.<sup>219</sup> Additionally, these restrictions ensure that the “Party supervises its own conduct and enforces strict discipline,” so the CCP “will always be the firm leadership core for advancing the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics.”<sup>220</sup> By connecting Party unity and stability with the clampdowns on corruption, Xi Jinping ensures that both efforts' success are associated with realizing the China Dream.

In addition to tightening discipline within Party ranks, the government's overwhelming focus on combating corruption led to the codification of Xi Jinping's superiority within the CCP. Specifically, Xi Jinping's rousing 2019 address to the CCDI led to the passage of a CCDI communique. In this communique, the CCDI concluded that the safeguarding of Xi Jinping's status at the core of the CCP Central Committee and Party was a top initiative for 2019.<sup>221</sup>

---

<sup>217</sup>“Xi Jinping Delivered an Important Speech at the Third Plenary Session of the 19th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection,” Xinhua News Agency, January 11, 2019, accessed November 20, 2020. [http://www.ccdi.gov.cn/toutiao/201901/t20190111\\_186902.html](http://www.ccdi.gov.cn/toutiao/201901/t20190111_186902.html).

<sup>218</sup> Cao Desheng, “Xi: Step up Fight Against Corruption,” *China Daily*, January 12, 2012, accessed November 22, 2020. <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201901/12/WS5c390054a3106c65c34e4001.html>

<sup>219</sup> Wedeman, “Xi Jinping's Tiger Hunt,” 66.

<sup>220</sup> Jinping. “Address of General Secretary Xi Jinping to the Politburo Standing Committee.”

<sup>221</sup> “CCDI Adopts Communique at Plenary Session,” Xinhua News Agency, January 13, 2019, accessed November 20, 2020. <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201901/13/WS5c3b1b31a3106c65c34e41c3.html>

Simultaneously, this communique emphasized the superiority of the Party Central Committee in managing discipline throughout the CCP. Thus, the very government infrastructure Xi Jinping revolutionized and empowered with his anticorruption initiatives (CCDI) effectively fortified his domination of Chinese politics. Solidifying the General Secretary's position as the crux of the CCP, the CCDI communique ensures that corruption reforms will remain a cornerstone of Xi Jinping's and, thus, the CCP's political agenda.

Employing his domination of the CCP's political structure, Xi Jinping promulgates a nationalist political agenda emphasizing the close relationship between economic growth and the China Dream. Because China's rise as a great power is contingent on its sustained economic prosperity, only a stable domestic order and a peaceful external environment will guarantee undisturbed growth.<sup>222</sup> Xi Jinping promulgates the Chinese nation's historical goals, prevalent in politics since the market reforms of the 1980s and 1990s: economic development and anti-imperialism in order to reach a high international status.<sup>223</sup> Thus, the CCP's political narrative emphasizes economic progress as a cornerstone of the China Dream. For example, at the 19th National Congress of the CCP in 2017, Xi Jinping identifies "securing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects" as a central theme.<sup>224</sup> Xi Jinping highlights that "it is imperative that [China] develop a modernized economy" as both an "urgent requirement for getting us smoothly through this critical transition and a strategic goal for China's development."<sup>225</sup> Additionally, while outlining China's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-

---

<sup>222</sup> Abanti Bhattacharya, "Chinese Nationalism and China's Assertive Foreign Policy," *The Journal of East Asian Affairs* 21, no. 1 (2007): 248, accessed October 21, 2020, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23258004>.

<sup>223</sup> Mario Esteban, "The Management of Nationalism during the Jiang Era (1994-2002) and its Implications on Government and Regime legitimacy," *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 5, no. 2 (2006): 191.

<sup>224</sup> Jinping, "Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era."

<sup>225</sup> Jinping, "Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era."

2025) in October 2020, Xi Jinping commented that “China will continue to focus on economic development to ensure that peace and development remain the theme of the times.”<sup>226</sup>

Throughout his policy agenda, Xi Jinping habitually unites economic growth with the stable future of the China Dream.

To achieve the domestic stability, national rejuvenation, and financial superiority of the aspirational China Dream, Xi Jinping establishes ambitious economic goals. For example, in September 2020, Xi Jinping pledged the achievement of a carbon-neutral China by 2060.

Although China is the global leader in greenhouse gas emissions, Xi Jinping stated that “China will scale up its environmental [efforts] by adopting more vigorous policies and measures.”<sup>227</sup>

The One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative is similarly aggressive. Pledging to invest more than US\$50 billion, Xi Jinping commented that “the Belt and Road will be built into a road of prosperity; development is the master key to solving all problems.”<sup>228</sup> While China's heavy use of coal-fired plants to develop the OBOR initiative regions could adversely affect their aspirations for carbon-neutrality, both objectives ultimately support the China Dream's goal of national rejuvenation through economic superiority. Effectively, the China Dream has reinforced the importance of China’s money-first atmosphere where bureaucrats and officials have new opportunities (and fewer disincentives) to put their influence up for hire.<sup>229</sup> Aspirations

---

<sup>226</sup>“Communique of 5th Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee Released,” Xinhua News Agency, October 29, 2020, accessed November 20, 2020, [https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202010/29/WS5f9a8f79a31024ad0ba81f81\\_3.html](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202010/29/WS5f9a8f79a31024ad0ba81f81_3.html)

<sup>227</sup> “‘Enhance Solidarity’ to fight COVID-19, Chinese President urges, also pledges carbon neutrality by 2060.” United Nations News, September 22, 2020, accessed December 2, 2020, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/09/1073052>

<sup>228</sup> “Full text of President Xi’s speech at opening of Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation,” Xinhua News Agency, May 14, 2017, accessed December 2, 2020, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-05/14/c\\_136282982.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-05/14/c_136282982.htm).

<sup>229</sup> Hao and Johnston, 591.

for carbon neutrality and the OBOR initiative are excellent examples of grandiose economic goals—and additional sources of corruption—of the CCP under the helm of Xi Jinping.

Despite the zeal of the Xi Jinping era's economic initiatives, they may prove unattainable due to China's lack of adequate government infrastructure to monitor and deter corruption as well as institutional shortcomings. As the CCP places more demands on companies to support this aggressive growth, corruption could invariably increase.<sup>230</sup> Faced with unrealistic demands for production outputs or the development of innovative technology, some companies may revert to reliance on comfortable *guanxi* networks to ease unsustainable operations. Additionally, Xi Jinping's anticorruption reforms have created a political infrastructure that reimagines *guanxi* networks in a modern form that is obedient to the primacy of the CCP and its nationalist agenda. While ambitious, Xi Jinping's revamped anticorruption infrastructure—CCDI, NSC, code of conduct for CCP officials—may support the dangerous culture of corruption it hopes to control. With corruption figures consistent since the institution of stricter spending regulations on Party members in 2015, it is unlikely that Xi Jinping's anticorruption infrastructure can effectively combat corruption. China's continually dismal record in Transparency International's reports indicates endemic corruption and the shortcomings of Xi Jinping's reforms.

While Xi Jinping's anticorruption initiatives may prove ineffective, they establish the larger goal of further promoting the CCP's nationalist ideology. Specifically, the CCP's anticorruption reforms bolster the Party's efforts to centralize Chinese political authority with the CCP. Xi Jinping's anticorruption initiatives are an alternative modality of promoting a manufactured Chinese nationalism founded upon a culture where corruption—now synonymous with disloyalty to Xi Jinping's authority—is criminal. The anticorruption infrastructure and its

---

<sup>230</sup> Joseph Fewsmith. "China's Uncertain Future Under an All-Powerful Xi Jinping: An Interview with Prof. Joseph Fewsmith." *Harvard International Review* 40, no. 1 (2019): 44, accessed October 4, 2020, doi:10.2307/26617393.



reforms empower the CCP and disenfranchise its perceived opponents. The high-profile corruption cases investigated by the CCDI primarily prosecute Xi Jinping's rivals, such as Bo Xilai, Sun Zhengcai and Zhong Yongkang. Additionally, Yang Xiaodu, a noted ally of Xi Jinping, oversees the NSC. With its *luizi*, or detention, powers, the NSC can hold suspects in custody for six months without counsel or a hearing.<sup>231</sup> While the CCDIs fortified powers and the newly appointed local CDIs should increase oversight of potential sources of corruption, their investigation and prosecution of non-CCP members ensure they remain an efficient tool for identifying dissenting opinions from the Party line. Ultimately, the expansive powers of the Party in corruption infrastructure and the CCPs selective disciplining of political opponents ensures that Xi Jinping's administration crafts a nationalist ideology where the following mindsets are ruthlessly enforced: the authority of the central government reigns supreme and political dissent breeds instability. Confronted with endemic corruption from the CCP, the China Dream's lofty economic goals and the Party's nationalist ambitions may prove unattainable without sufficient political reforms.

## **Conclusion**

Despite their successes in consolidating Xi Jinping's power, the anticorruption reforms' efficacy is still unproven. While ambitious, these anticorruption rectification campaigns must reconcile countless ideological difficulties to be optimally effective. For example, Xi Jinping's anticorruption policies must simultaneously overcome traditional notions of entrenched corruption and support the CCP's current narrative of modernity and national rejuvenation. Additionally, these policies must highlight the injustices and abuses within the CCP while still

---

<sup>231</sup> Gillian Dell, Andrew McDevitt, Huma Haider, Julius Hinks, Casey Kelso, and Johannes Wendt. Exporting Corruption: Progress Report 2018: Assessing Enforcement of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. Report. Edited by Debere Stephanie. Transparency International, 2018. 93-103.

garnering support for the government from the Chinese population. This confidence in government is essential to promoting the political and economic objectives of the CCP in support of their nationalist agenda. While the CCP's corruption reforms are wide-ranging, some of Xi Jinping's statistical successes could result from changing public perceptions of corruption instead of the efficiency of the reforms themselves. Arguably, the high-profile cases of Chen Xitong and Wang Baosen likely facilitated a shift in society's tolerance for corruption in the CCP. Social, political, and economic changes in the twenty-first century affect Xi Jinping's anticorruption campaigns' efficacy.

Xi Jinping's anticorruption initiatives ultimately facilitate the perpetuation of *guanxi* networks, support the authority of the CCP and its nationalist agenda, and encourage the continuation of widespread corruption. Remarkably, Xi Jinping both employs the cultural practices he vehemently opposes (*guanxi* networks) while simultaneously enforcing bureaucratic reorganization. While Xi Jinping's modern and state-centric constructivist nationalist ideology champions increased stability and decreased corruption at a surface level, its biased execution of corruption reforms and underlying emphasis on economic progress ensures corruption will invariably increase. Even if the CCP continues its advocacy of manufactured nationalism—where the authority of the CCP and loyalty to Xi Jinping's agenda reigns supreme—without careful reform, Xi Jinping's China Dream may become synonymous with corruption. A thorough understanding of the implications of Xi Jinping's distinct nationalist agenda on Chinese corruption levels can fortify the international community's understanding of the inner workings of a burgeoning world power. China's historical propensity to corruption combined with the execution of Xi Jinping's imbalanced anticorruption initiatives has created a nation whose political future will be undeniably influenced by the singular nationalism of the Xi Jinping era.

## Chapter 5

# Building an Ecological Civilization: Nationalism and Environmental Civil Society in China

Inaugurated at the CCPs 17th National Congress, the ethos of an ecological civilization<sup>232</sup> quickly became a central focus of the CCP. While the CCP historically addresses environmental concerns as merely a small facet of its grandiose political agenda, the 17th (2007) and 18th (2012) National Congresses codified environmental conservation as an essential component of China's long-term global ambitions. The passage of stricter environmental legislation and various bureaucratic reforms, and a publicly popular—albeit seemingly unattainable—emissions targets support this theoretical ecological civilization. An increasing number of widespread environmental protests, effective domestic and foreign Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and media publicity targeting a generation of environmentally conscious Chinese creates a formidable environmental civil society supportive of the idealistic tenants of the CCPs ecological civilization. While the rising number of environmentally conscious organizations and ecologically conscious government policies are indicators of an increasingly influential environmental civil society, they also support China's rise within the international hierarchy by mirroring other first-world nations' environmental standards. While robust, China's

---

<sup>232</sup> Hu Jintao, “Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all,” 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, October 15, 2007, accessed February 16, 2021, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/congress/229611.htm>

environmental civil society is a small component of China's broader goals to redefine its global image as a leader in ecological reforms. Ultimately, China's growing environmental consciousness is the result of a civil society immeasurably influenced by the nationalist policies of the CCP under Xi Jinping.

In conjunction with China's meteoric rise in the global economic and political hierarchy, China is gradually positioning itself at the forefront of environmental compliance within the international community. Internationally, China lends its support to selective climate change accords and publicizes sustainable practices in the nations affected by the Belt and Road Initiative. Domestically, Xi Jinping champions the creation of an ecological civilization through bureaucratic reforms, propaganda campaigns, and lofty national ambitions. While China may be the world's largest emitter of carbon dioxide, Xi Jinping announced in September 2020 that China would reach carbon neutrality by 2060. The stark dichotomy of China's negative environmental footprint and its positive future environmental aspirations raises questions on Chinese environmentalism's origins and efficacy. China's recent turn to environmentalism originates from a two-fold agenda: to secure domestic stability and the appearance of political liberalism through support to environmental CSOs and to foster a positive image by leading the international community in environmental affairs.

While robust, China's environmental civil society is a small component of China's broader goals to redefine its global image as a leader in ecological reforms. Ultimately, China's growing environmental consciousness is the result of a civil society immeasurably influenced by the control mechanisms of the CCP and its distinct nationalist narrative under Xi Jinping. To analyze the nature of China's environmental civil society and broader nationalistic goals, this paper will highlight a variety of factors in four sections. First, I will provide an overview of

environmental civil society and discuss the history of environmentalism in China. Second, I will examine the relationship between environmental civil society and the CCP. Third, I will highlight major incidents of environmental activism by environmental civil society groups. Fourth, I will analyze the relationship between Xi Jinping's environmental agenda and nationalism. Ultimately, an understanding of environmental civil society's relationship to Xi Jinping's political agenda will provide a greater understanding of China's singular approach to nationalism.

### **Civil Society and Environmentalism in China**

Marxist-Leninist ideology and traditional Maosim are undeniable influences on contemporary China's views on civil society. Because the Soviet Union was the pre-eminent Communist power when the modern nation-state of China was founded in 1949, the CCP relied heavily on Soviet political structures and operations as a model for early Maoism. According to the Soviet bureaucratic system, environmental problems were seen as temporary phenomena that could be solved through scientific and technological measures.<sup>233</sup> An impediment to national unity, civil society was primarily abandoned or ignored under the Soviet system. Similarly, the early iterations of the CCP eliminated anything that stood between the state and the individual; only state entities parading as non-state entities were permitted to continue operating.<sup>234</sup> Employing hierarchical mass line communication, Mao Zedong sought to limit the ideological chasm between the Chinese people and the CCP. If the Party could communicate nearly directly with the Chinese people, then civil society organizations (CSOs) were unnecessary. Until the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, environmental CSOs and environmental activism were nearly

---

<sup>233</sup> Ho, 895

<sup>234</sup> The Economist. "Beneath the glacier: Chinese civil society," April 12, 2014, accessed January 30, 2021, <https://www.economist.com/china/2014/04/12/beneath-the-glacier>.

non-existent. Influenced by China's Soviet and Maoist origins, the CCP viewed environmental activism as an impediment to economic development and a sound relationship between the CCP and the Chinese people.

As restrictions on China's economy and political life eased after Mao Zedong's death, a gradual increase in environmental awareness supported the slow growth of environmental CSOs. In 1978, Deng Xiaoping began a series of reforms that revitalized China's political, economic, and social life. These gradual modernizations, however, did not reverse the CCP's traditional unsympathetic view toward unregulated civil society. The modern CCP maintains that civil society is state-led, and cooperates with, rather than opposes the state; political space is thus conferred and, by extension, guided by the state.<sup>235</sup> While most early NGOs or CSOs focused on broad philanthropy topics (poverty reduction, children's healthcare) under government oversight, environmental CSOs slowly organized. Notably, the growing presence of international NGOs in China supported the gradual growth of environmental activism. Unfortunately, the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989 led to the silencing of any civilian activism regarding political topics. While many students and protestors abandoned activism following the deadly confrontation, many channeled their energies to less controversial issues—environmental organizations with non-threatening platforms. In Beijing, the number of formally registered environmental social organizations rose from one to four between 1967 and 1992 and doubled from nine to eighteen from 1995 to 1996.<sup>236</sup> By 2008, 2,768 environmental CSOs were operating in China.<sup>237</sup> Because environmental CSOs successfully adapted to changing political and social trends, they gradually gained prominence in Chinese society.

---

<sup>235</sup> Schwartz, 45.

<sup>236</sup> Ho, 901.

<sup>237</sup> Bao Maohong, "Environmental NGOs in Transforming China." *Nature and Culture* 4, no. 1 (2009): 2, accessed on January 8, 2021, [www.jstor.org/stable/43304125](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43304125).

Despite the CCPs relative toleration of non-confrontational CSOs, the Party's views on civilian activism tightened in the 2000s as the perceived liabilities of an opening society in the digital age increased. In 2013, the CCP issued the Communiqué on the Current State of the Ideological Sphere identifying seven subversive currents coursing through Chinese society.<sup>238</sup> Anecdotally referred to as Document Number Nine, this directive emphasized the importance of Party unity by attacking dangerous ideologies that could adversely affect China's growth and stability. The directive specifically identified Western constitutional democracy, civil society, and neo-liberalism as part of a complicated, intense struggle to undermine China's ideological sphere.<sup>239</sup> Shortly after its publication, observers noted an increase in the arrests of noted activists, lawyers, and academics from a wide range of CSOs.<sup>240</sup> Document Number Nine indicates the CCPs grave insecurity that any substantial opening of society--primarily via CSOs--could facilitate further social unrest and political change.

The CCP further codified its strict relationship with social organizations through the Charity Law and the Law on the Management of Foreign Non-Governmental Organizations (Foreign NGO Law) in 2016. Both laws implemented significant controls over civil society operations in China. The Charity Law increased the barriers for official designation as a CSO or NGO—registration fees, government backing, minimum membership—and subsequently inhibited numerous organizations from operating legally or at all. The Foreign NGO Law made a clear distinction between domestic and foreign resources, raising barriers for Chinese organizations (particularly unregistered grassroots groups) seeking foreign funding and

---

<sup>238</sup> Chris Buckley. "China Takes Aim at Western Ideas." *The New York Times*, August 19, 2013, accessed on March 10, 2021. [https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/20/world/asia/chinas-new-leadership-takes-hard-line-in-secret-memo.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/20/world/asia/chinas-new-leadership-takes-hard-line-in-secret-memo.html?_r=0)

<sup>239</sup> China File. "Document 9: A ChinaFile Translation," November 8, 2013, accessed on March 10, 2021. <https://www.chinafile.com/document-9-chinafile-translation>

<sup>240</sup> Buckley, "China Takes Aim at Western Ideas."

collaboration.<sup>241</sup> The Ministry of Public Security (MPS) regulates foreign NGOs and stipulates that they must be sponsored by a government agency and cannot inhibit national security. While both laws included positive benefits for CSOs—tax benefits, policy advice from authorities, codifying a once confusing and regulated—they ultimately increased CCP oversight and decreased CSOs autonomy. After Document Number Nine codified civil society as a threat to national stability, the 2016 NGO laws further exemplify the CCPs attempts to increase their jurisdiction over CSOs, both foreign and domestic.

Although the CCP has exerted significant effort to stifle civic involvement, the CCP largely fails to quell the growing societal awareness of environmental issues. This societal awareness drives an increasing number of citizens to advocate for environmental causes or participate in civilian activism organizations. From 2001 to 2005, governmental organizations of environmental protection received 2,530,000 letters from the masses, as well as 430,000 visits, totaling 597,000 people affected by pollution, accepted 673 proposals from members of the National People's Congress, and 521 proposals from members of the National Political Consultant Conference (the political advisory body of the CCP).<sup>242</sup> Natural disasters and rampant pollution forced many citizens to reconsider China's environmental record and the government's role in environmental protection. For example, the government's slow response to an earthquake in Sichuan in 2008 which killed 70,000, prompted many citizens to participate in CSOs. In 2011, the U.S. Embassy in Beijing's published air pollution data revealed Beijing's worsening air quality. Not only did these reports contradict those disseminated by the Beijing municipal government, but they also led to vocal societal discontent, which forced the CCP to censor any

---

<sup>241</sup> International Center for Not-For-Profit Law, "Civic Freedom Monitor: China," January 14, 2021, accessed on January 26, 2021, <https://www.icnl.org/resources/civic-freedom-monitor/china>

<sup>242</sup> Maohong, 2.



discussions on air quality from the Internet and social media.<sup>243</sup> The perception by many members of the Chinese public that the CCP ignores environmental affairs—much to society's detriment—pushes some citizens to support environmental activism despite the CCPs restraints.

Despite mounting public support for environmental issues, the CCP has failed to create an effective governmental system to regulate, monitor, and enforce environmental statutes. Of the twenty-eight environmental protection laws passed in China since 1979, thirteen were passed between 2000 and 2008.<sup>244</sup> From 2007-2013, the CCP established 130 environmental courts to hear civil, criminal, and administrative environmental cases.<sup>245</sup> These environmental courts are a powerful tool to set a legal precedent for environmental issues and appease the Chinese public's growing zeal for environmental concerns. The low number of cases investigated—on average less than 100 a year<sup>246</sup>—and the selective organizations involved—largely GONGOs or government special interest groups--indicate the environmental court systems' potential futility. Touted by the CCP as a significant step forward for China's environmental compliance, the Environmental Protection Law is another example of selective environmentalism. In 2015, the revised law authorized CSOs to sue polluters to protect the public interest. The low number of past cases (eight before 2012, two in 2014, three in 2015) are attributed to state supported GONGOs or CSOs, while recent case data is absent.<sup>247</sup> The central government can effectively dictate which environmental issues are deemed worthy of investigation, effectively ignoring

---

<sup>243</sup> Edward Wong, "Outrage Grows Over Air Pollution and China's Response," *The New York Times*, December 6, 2011, accessed on 12 March 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/07/world/asia/beijing-journal-anger-grows-over-air-pollution-in-china.html>

<sup>244</sup> Elizabeth Economy, "The Challenge of Greening China," In *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*, Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press (2010), 108, accessed April 4, 2021, doi:10.7591/j.ctt7z8gj.8. 108.

<sup>245</sup> Rachel Stern. "The Political Logic of China's New Environmental Courts." *China Journal*, no. 72 (July 2014), 72, accessed January 16, 2021, doi:10.1086/677051.

<sup>246</sup> Stern, 72.

<sup>247</sup> Scott Wilson. "Mixed Verdict on Chinese Environmental Public Interest Lawsuits," *The Diplomat*, July 20, 2015, accessed February 12, 2021. <https://thediplomat.com/2015/07/mixed-verdict-on-chinese-environmental-public-interest-lawsuits/>

concerns that portray the CCP in an unflattering manner. In the end, environmental protection is just one goal of the environmental court system, to be balanced carefully with the need to safeguard social stability and the continued, vital importance of economic growth.<sup>248</sup> China's environmental legal framework indicates the CCPs imbalanced dedication to environmental reforms.

Like environmental legislation, environmental regulatory bodies in China suffer from biased oversight and improper implementation. National environmental standards are regulated by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE), elevated to a ministerial organ in 2008. Previously known as the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) and the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China (MEP), the MEE oversees twelve internal departments and the subnational Environmental Protection Bureaus (EPBs). While the CCPs policies typically highlight the central government's primacy, environmental regulations ironically empower local authorities. Local governments are the front lines of identifying environmental concerns, punishing offenders, and enforcing regulations. Unfortunately, environmental protection often loses to the more attractive goal of economic development.<sup>249</sup> EPBs receive funding from provincial governments and are primarily beholden to local interests. With little support from the MEE and its previous iterations—SEPA had only one-eighth of the employees of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as of 2015—local governments habitually prioritize economic growth. The patchwork environmental authorities of ministerial <sup>250</sup>mandates, local action plans, and central crackdowns reflects the often conflicting lines of authority that fragment the Chinese state and environmental governance; environmental

---

<sup>248</sup> Stern, 74.

<sup>249</sup> Schwartz, 34.

<sup>250</sup> Jianguo Liu and Jared Diamond. "Revolutionizing China's Environmental Protection." *Science* 319, no. 5859 (2008): 37.

compliance is ad hoc and short-lived.<sup>251</sup> Ultimately, two key shortcomings--insufficient authority and lack of coordination among institutions—highlight China's environmental regulatory bodies' institutional deficiencies.<sup>252</sup> Because many environmental regulatory bodies improperly execute their duties, environmentalism remains unsupported by the Chinese government.

### **Environmental Civil Society and the CCP**

To survive amidst the CCPs draconian approach toward civil society, environmental CSOs must constantly adapt to remain relevant to the community and nonthreatening to the Party-state apparatus. Due to their recent development, many environmental CSOs are weak in terms of organization, and human and financial resources while also primarily focusing on regional issues.<sup>253</sup> However, their focus on local or regional matters ensures these CSOs undertake little risk that their niche focus area will foster a national movement. Increasing awareness of the perils of environmental degradation by the CCP and the Chinese public help provide environmental CSOs with a growing comprehensive support base. Instead of appealing to only academic or social elites like political movements of the past, modern environmental CSOs attract concerned citizens from various social classes. The rising middle class, specifically, has called for a more transparent and accountable system of governance throughout a variety of sectors in Chinese society, environmentalism included.<sup>254</sup> Their local nature and goal of protecting the environment, rather than political rights or commercial organizations, enables the movements to organize a large number of citizens with little effort in a very short time.<sup>255</sup> While the diverse membership of environmental CSOs could prove dangerous to the CCP in the future,

---

<sup>251</sup> Li, *China Goes Green*, 200.

<sup>252</sup> Xiaofan Li. "Environmental Concerns in China: Problems, Policies, and Global Implications." *International Social Science Review* 81, no. 1/2 (2006): 5, accessed January 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41887258>.

<sup>253</sup> Ho, 914.

<sup>254</sup> Chen, 503.

<sup>255</sup> Qian Wang. "China's Environmental Civilian Activism," *Science* 328, no. 5980 (2010): 824, accessed February 5, 2021, DOI: 10.1126/science.328.5980.824-a.

the current CSOs adherence to regional, passive topics is deliberate. To maintain relevance amongst the CCPs uncompromising political agenda, environmental CSOs have largely secured a nonthreatening position in society supported by diverse membership.

China's most influential environmental—the Friends of Nature—remains successful due to its advocacy for regional issues, socially diverse membership, and overall apolitical nature. Although the Friends of Nature is not an official GONGO, its registration with the Ministry of Civil Affairs ensures it boasts numerous Party supporters contributing to its lengthy and nonconfrontational history. Established in 1993, its charismatic leader, Liang Congjie, adeptly steered the organization along the delicate CCP political lines until 2010. The organization boasts over 100,000 members with numerous branch offices.<sup>256</sup> Under Congjie's leadership, the Friends of Nature successfully advocated for publicly popular issues like protecting the Tibetan antelope and the snub-nosed monkey. Although their campaigns gain moderate national attention, each issue's specificity and the entire organization's measured apolitical tactics ensure the Friends of Nature remains non-threatening to the CCP. The Friends of Nature limits its membership and rejects branch office or affiliation requests, concerned that if it attracts too many members or even establishes a close relationship with any regional group, it might be viewed as contravening government restrictions on NGO activities.<sup>257</sup> Additionally, as a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Standing Committee with numerous political contacts, Liang Congjie was an invaluable asset to the group's political credibility. Yet, Liang Congjie's greatest contribution to environmentalism in China may well be in his service as an activist above reproach; with his distinguished reform lineage, as well as his nonconfrontational approach to change, he was able to work within the system to push the

---

<sup>256</sup> Schwartz, 39.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid, 39.

boundaries of what the government considers acceptable activities for NGOs.<sup>258</sup> By continually blending environmentalism with Party allegiance, the Friends of Nature continues to prove itself the most influential environmental CSO in China.

Despite the Friends of Nature's success in navigating CCP politics, environmental CSOs are still subject to significant control mechanisms and central government restrictions. The autonomy of green social organizations is a space of continuous negotiation and wavering between official control and informal toleration.<sup>259</sup> The CCPs primary control method is through the recent Charity and Foreign NGO Laws' registration and operation restrictions. By raising the fees, minimum membership, and overall requirements for CSO registration, the CCP effectively bars countless non-state supported organizations from entry into the official discourse. In 2019, the Minister of Civil Affairs estimated that there were approximately 800,000 social organizations in China.<sup>260</sup> Yet, the Ministry also estimates that only 23.3 percent of environmental CSOs register properly and the remainder are illegal.<sup>261</sup> Without official government recognition, CSOs and their members are subject to legal ramifications, further deterring entry into unsanctioned NGOs. In addition to limiting registration requirements, the central government delineates formal regulations to shut down NGOs. According to the Public Security Bureau, local officials can neutralize a troublesome NGO through the following means: the sponsoring organization can cease its support, the NGO can be closed down for financial reasons, and key leaders of the NGO can be transferred to other jobs that leave them little to no

---

<sup>258</sup> Elizabeth Economy. "The New Politics of the Environment," In *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*, Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, (2010), 157, accessed January 16, 2021, doi:10.7591/j.ctt7z8gj.9.

<sup>259</sup> Ho, 915.

<sup>260</sup> Luo Win, "More than 800,000 social organizations in China" *People's Daily*, January 7, 2019, accessed on February 20, 2021, [http://www.cssn.cn/shtt/201901/t20190107\\_4806979.shtml](http://www.cssn.cn/shtt/201901/t20190107_4806979.shtml)

<sup>261</sup> Maohong, 7.

time for outside work with the NGO.<sup>262</sup> The codification of barriers to establishment and justifications for closure of environmental CSOs provides ample opportunity for the CCP to control their agenda and operations.

In addition to regulating the operations of CSOs and NGOs, the CCP also controls the operations of GONGOs. Grassroots organizations are dependent on the recognition of the state and therefore seek to strengthen their contacts with government officials.<sup>263</sup> Conversely, GONGOs are state sanctioned organizations secure in the political and financial support of the CCP. While all legal CSOs in China must be registered with and supported by a government agency, GONGOs paradoxically enjoy greater freedoms and restrictions due to their close affiliations with the CCP. GONGOs access to government officials ensures they can influence policy discussions and freely criticize local officials. However, the MEE controls the finances of GONGOs (salaries, manning) and GONGOs overall have limited autonomy; they are constrained in their ability to take positions critical of broader government protection initiatives.<sup>264</sup> Staffed with former government officials and Party members, GONGOs are transparent mouthpieces of the CCPs environmental priorities that generally value economic interests over environmental protection. A state-directed effort to train government bureaucrats in establishing NGOs is a testament to the depths of CCPs involvement in GONGOs.<sup>265</sup> By solely protecting CCP environmental interests and monopolizing environmental discourse, GONGOs hinder the development of grassroots organizations that could better reflect the Chinese population's environmental priorities.

---

<sup>262</sup> Economy, "The New Politics of the Environment," 140.

<sup>263</sup> Ho, 911.

<sup>264</sup> Schwartz, 43.

<sup>265</sup> Economy, "The New Politics of the Environment," 142.

The CCPs efforts to monitor, prohibit, and control the public discourse on environmentalism through GONGO and CSO restrictions indicate an underlying fear: an unregulated environmental civil society could serve as a catalyst for greater social and political reforms. The intense oversight of NGOs and GONGOs is merely a small indication of the CCPs intense paranoia of losing political control, thus facilitating a degradation of social stability. The CCP fears that environmental NGOs (ENGOS) could potentially become a force against the government, which would not be helpful to the construction of a harmonious society; a harmonious society is a static balance society, not a dynamic one.<sup>266</sup> Because of the CCPs emphasis on social and political stability, environmental CSOs attempts to advocate for noncontroversial topics may, unfortunately, be futile. Environmental action without explicit political aims may still be political; it is politics by other means.<sup>267</sup> Incidents of successful environmental activism—whether by GONGOs or NGOs—could serve as a precursor to reconstructing state-societal relations. Despite the inherent biases of continual alignment with CCP directives, the current operations of the environmental court system, GONGOs, and the environmental bureaucracy reflect the Chinese public's overwhelming desire for environmental reforms. The intense oversight from the CCP ensures that environmental change will only occur incrementally. Yet, the CCP will continue to supervise environmental operations until the threat of social and political reform subsides.

Despite the CCPs continual efforts to regulate environmental civil society in China, environmental CSOs are thriving, albeit within strict confines of CCP oversight. Because of its gradual and state-controlled development, environmentalism currently has an opportunity to win influence in environmental policymaking; to build up strong expertise on specialized issues; and

---

<sup>266</sup> Maohong, 69.

<sup>267</sup> Yang, 55.

gain experience with participatory actions that give citizenry a voice.<sup>268</sup> The environmental CSOs that thrive under the vigilant oversight of the CCP undoubtedly propel environmental change while learning invaluable techniques for survival under an autocratic government. Additionally, the rise of China's ENGOs has a discursive outcome: it launches public debates and media campaigns about environmental issues, thus introducing a new environmental discourse into the public sphere.<sup>269</sup> While environmental groups may not specifically strive for more significant political change, their operations support a state-societal dialogue that is novel in the single-party state. Environmental civil society also serves as an essential mediator of societal tension by channeling popular grievances into legal and peaceful forms of protest and seeking redress.<sup>270</sup> Ironically, Chinese environmental civil society provides a non-threatening outlet for the politically inclined while simultaneously portraying the CCP as a progressive entity sympathetic to the public's concerns. The CCPs apparent sympathies to environmental issues, however, does not mean that the central government has the resources, time, or desire to address environmental concerns. Thus, environmental CSOs fill roles previously occupied by the national or local governments and state-owned enterprises.<sup>271</sup> The dichotomy of the CCPs attempts to regulate environmental civil society while relegating environmental concerns to secondary political priorities is telling of the Party's intense fear of political destabilization. By supporting a thriving environmental civil society that is paradoxically terrified of a CCP crackdown, the Party retains ultimate control.

### **Environmental Protests**

---

<sup>268</sup> Ho, 917-18.

<sup>269</sup> Yang, 65.

<sup>270</sup> Ling, 125.

<sup>271</sup> Economy, "The New Politics of the Environment," 136.



Despite the CCPs attempts to completely control environmental CSOs, CSOs support an increasing number of environmental protests in recent history. By adhering to the same operational tenants as successful environmental CSOs, civilian activism experiences growing visibility in Chinese society. For example, most modern environmental protests focus on local or regional issues, thereby negating the CCPs fears of a larger national environmental movement. Protests since the late 1990s typically seek compensation, or nominal retrospective justice, for a controversial act that occurred in the past, thus emphasizing victimhood-driven resistance.<sup>272</sup> In the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square massacre, environmental protests typically involved only academics or social elites; broad social movements were viewed as both dangerous and ineffective. However, most twenty-first century protests are nonexclusive, preventive, and have mutual reinforcement with sustained advocacy.<sup>273</sup> Because this activism aligns with CCP priorities and highlights regional concerns, it remains favorable in the eyes of the Party's elites. Although recent environmental activism in China results in well-publicized protests, they ultimately adhere to the unthreatening, issue-driven, and unifying ethos of environmental CSOs.

In addition to maintaining politically palatable organizational tactics, environmental protests in China adeptly utilize the media. The Internet and social media are undisputedly the quickest and most effective means of communicating China's ever-growing population. Between 2000 and 2017, the number of Chinese Internet users skyrocketed from 22.5 million to over 720 million, making it the world's largest Internet nation.<sup>274</sup> Environmental CSOs employ this consistent internet usage to disseminate ideas, coordinate protests, and invigorate supporters.

---

<sup>272</sup> Steinhardt, 65

<sup>273</sup> Ibid, 77.

<sup>274</sup> Brunner, Elizabeth, "Wild Public Networks and Affective Movements in China: Environmental Activism, Social Media, and Protest in Maoming," *Journal of Communication* 67, no. 5 (October 2017): 665.  
doi:10.1111/jcom.12323.

Interestingly, in China's complex political environment where censorship is widespread and protest rights are limited, social media makes possible the decentralized and rhizomatic uprisings that punctuate and invigorate China's growing environmental movement.<sup>275</sup> While environmental CSOs employ the Internet and social media adroitly, the CCP has also sanctioned extensive media coverage for environmental protests. For the media, environmental issues are news-worthy, loaded with moral and political meanings and policy implications, yet politically safe because they fall in line with the state policy of sustainable development.<sup>276</sup> While essential in spreading environmental awareness throughout China, media coverage of environmental issues and protests also provide essential backup for the CCPs limited bandwidth. Specifically, by promoting the growth of environmental NGOs and media coverage of environmental issues, the Chinese leadership hopes to fill the gap between its desire to improve the country's environment and its capacity to do so.<sup>277</sup> Environmental activists, the CCP, and media outlets employ the Internet and social media to serve individual concerns.

The first major environmental protest of the twenty-first century involved southwestern China's Nu River in the Yunnan province. Flowing from Tibet to the Andaman Sea, the Nu River—also referred to as the Salween River—runs through southern China and sections of Myanmar and Thailand. In 2005, the CCP introduced plans to build thirteen dams along the river to provide 3.64 million kilowatts of power to the region.<sup>278</sup> Environmental groups opposed the forcible displacement of 50,000 Chinese citizens, adverse effects on the livelihoods of millions living downstream in Myanmar and Thailand, and the negative consequences on the Nu River

---

<sup>275</sup> Brunner, 666.

<sup>276</sup> Yang, 56.

<sup>277</sup> Economy, "The New Politics of the Environment," 136

<sup>278</sup> Xie and Van Der Heijden, 60.

Valley's delicate ecosystem.<sup>279</sup> In response to the dam proposal, 10,000 college students signed a petition against construction and held demonstrations at campuses throughout Yunnan Province.<sup>280</sup> Activists both worked through institutional channels—appealing to the Friends of Nature for support—and grassroots channels—an effective Internet campaign. Small farming communities along the Nu River also participated in the protests. As a result of the outrage, the CCP placed the proposed construction under environmental review in 2006. After nearly two decades of civilian activism and environmental protests, the Nu River remains the longest undammed river in mainland Southeast Asia. Portions of the river are now protected in China's Three Parallel Rivers UNESCO World Heritage Site. Although plans to construct five of the original thirteen dams were included in the 12th Five-year Plan in 2013, the plans were abandoned yet again in 2016. Efficient organization, multi-pronged activism, and a united population contributed to the Nu River protests' early successes.

Unfortunately, China's desire to dam the Nu River is full of paradoxes. While fears from the scientific community raised in 2017 that constructing a massive dam could trigger an earthquake contributed to the halting of the final stop on proposed construction, civilian activism by both provincial farmers and regional academics was a direct contributor to the continued delays project. Additionally, before environmental CSOs undertook Nu River activism as their prime focus, there was little evidence that any of the dam-affected people perceived injustice or made claims based on their rights.<sup>281</sup> However, when the CCP failed to achieve its goal of 350 gigawatts of hydropower by 2020, the Nu River development projects were pushed back into the

---

<sup>279</sup> Xie and Van Der Heijden, 61.

<sup>280</sup> Stalley and Yang, 342.

<sup>281</sup> Setsuko Matsuzawa. "Citizen Environmental Activism in China: Legacy, Alliances, and Rights-based Discourses." *ASIANetwork Exchange* 19 (2): 87., accessed February 15, 2021, DOI: 10.16995/ane.33

limelight.<sup>282</sup> The CCPs goal of developing Western provinces to reduce rural poverty and provide alternative energy sources still leaves the Nu River vulnerable. What is remarkable about the Nu River protest movement is that despite the CCPs push toward alternative energy sources and hydropower in the last few decades, activists have applied consistent pressure to the Party and prevented the construction of the dams on multiple occasions. Interestingly, in 2017 the CCP has approved funding for constructing a dam along the Myanmar portion of the Nu River. Thus, the CCP facilitated the ecological degradation of Myanmar's Nu River valley while protecting its own. Ultimately, consistent activism by both provincial farmers and regional academics are a direct contributor to the continued delays of dams on the Nu River.

Like the Nu River protests, the anti-paraxylene (PX) petrochemical plant protests in Xiamen were an excellent example of China's robust environmental civil society. In June 2007, the wealthy city of Xiamen was at a standstill due to widespread civilian outrage against the proposed construction of a PX petrochemical plant in the city. Due to improper operations, Chinese PX petrochemical plants release dangerous toxins into the air and drinking water. Students and professors at Xiamen University sent out a million mobile-phone text messages calling on their citizens to take to the streets.<sup>283</sup> Protestors reportedly numbering between 7,000 and 20,000 marched peacefully throughout the city, and a video of the activism was uploaded to YouTube and Weibo.<sup>284</sup> As a result of the well-coordinated protest, Xiamen's government cancelled plans for the PX plant. Ultimately, the Xiamen protests are considered a victory for public participation; the central government genuinely listened to environmental

---

<sup>282</sup> Edward Wong, "China's Last Wild River Carries Conflicting Environmental Hopes." *The New York Times*, June 18, 2016, accessed March 12, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/19/world/asia/china-climate-change-nu-river-greenhouse-gases.html>

<sup>283</sup> Economy, "The Great Leap Backward," 50.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid, 50.

concerns, and the Xiamen government worked to protect the city.<sup>285</sup> Citizens from diverse facets of society—students, business leaders, middle class, urban poor—joined in the protest efforts. Because of the unprecedented, expeditious, and well-organized response by the Xiamen population, the government’s quick reversal of their plans reached both national and international news. The anti-PX protests in Xiamen were a superb example of effective environmental activism.

While the Xiamen anti-PX protests resulted in little backlash, the larger anti-PX protest in Maoming in 2014 caused political unease. From March to April 2014, tens of thousands of protestors assembled in central Maoming while over 600 million connected on social media to view live footage of the ongoing protest.<sup>286</sup> Footage of the protests that internet censors quickly blocked revealed civilians injured by police forces. After an onslaught of outraged social media postings on Weibo and Weixin, the Maoming government stated that the proposed PX plant was still under review. As of 2021, the Maoming PX plant is still under review, with little likelihood that the plans will progress. Because of their effective use of the media, the Maoming protesters generated intense unease from the Maoming government, as evidenced by dangerous police actions and subsequent abandonment of the construction plans.

The Nu River, Xiamen, and Maoming protests each exemplify the ideals that have made environmental civil society in China a formidable force, despite the restrictive policies of the CCP. For example, each protest addressed regional issues—dams, PX plants—rather than broad divisive concerns. While hydropower, chemical contamination, or the government’s disregard for environmental issues were the overarching thematic concerns, the environmental NGOs

---

<sup>285</sup> Tang Hao, “Xiamen PX: A Turning Point?” *China Dialogue*, January 16, 2008, accessed on February 20, 2021, <https://chinadialogue.net/en/pollution/1626-xiamen-px-a-turning-point/>.

<sup>286</sup> Brunner, 665.

involved in these incidents instead focused on the very human appeal of a specific location and issue. Each protest included assorted social classes and adeptly employed the media. Most importantly, the Nu River, Xiamen, and Maoming protests delicately toed the line between subverting authority and respecting the primacy of the CCP. Environmental activists won small victories while the CCP continued to win the war of dominating environmental regulations. While construction of the Nu River Dams was halted in Chinese territory, the Chinese government is continuing with plans for five dams in other Southeast Asian nations, 90% of its electricity would be exported to China and Thailand.<sup>287</sup> The PX plant slated for the wealthy city of Xiamen was moved to the rural and poorer city of Zhangzhou in the Fujian province. Protests that erupted after an explosion in the Zhangzhou plant in 2013 were unsuccessful at halting operations. Despite the Maoming protest's social media successes, the CCP arrested, detained, and sentenced 18 activists after the events. Ultimately, the public is successful with determined yet moderate action; environmental activists must continue applying maximum pressure in a calm fashion to remain successful.<sup>288</sup> The protests in the Nu River, Xiamen, and Maoming were both successful and unfortunate examples of CCP biased environmentalism.

### **Xi Jinping's Environmental Agenda**

Since Xi Jinping's tenure as General Secretary began in 2012, the CCP's environmental agenda can be summarized in one phrase—ecological civilization. While it originates from the Soviet concept of ecological culture, ecological civilization rose to prominence in the CCP narrative beginning in 2007. At the 17th National People's Congress in 2007, Hu Jintao referenced ecological civilization as a new focal point for the CCP. When Hu Jintao transferred

---

<sup>287</sup> BBC News, "Aung San Suu Kyi's Myanmar dam dilemma with China," July 27, 2019, accessed March 20, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48857781>.

<sup>288</sup> Hao, 5.

power to Xi Jinping at the 18th National People's Congress in 2012, Xi Jinping solidified ecological civilization and environmentalism as a priority of the CCP and his tenure as General Secretary. Xi Jinping proclaimed that the CCP will raise its ecological awareness to respect, accommodate, and protect nature and follow a state policy of conserving resources and protecting the environment.<sup>289</sup> By 2018, ecological civilization was included in the CCP Constitution and the Constitution of the PRC. Ecological civilization is first and foremost as a continuation of China's developmental path under the leadership of the Communist Party—transforming from agricultural civilization to industrial civilization under Mao Zedong, then to material civilization under Deng Xiaoping, and now to ecological civilization under Xi Jinping—a faithful reincarnation of Marx's theory of the stages of socialist development with Chinese characteristics.<sup>290</sup> As General Secretary, Xi Jinping legitimizes the ecological civilization as both a continuation of Hu Jintao's policies and a fulfillment of socialist development.

The CCPs emphasis on creating an ecological civilization under Xi Jinping's leadership is an effective tool to connect China's past, present, and future political narratives. Because of the tremendous political appeal of environmentalism and the concept of an ecological civilization to the Chinese people, China's go-green efforts are inextricably linked to the political and ideological ambitions of the state.<sup>291</sup> Xi Jinping's vision for advancing the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics—the China Dream—embodies the CCPs political and ideological ambitions.<sup>292</sup> Unlike his predecessors, who had conceived of the environmental crisis as a social and political threat with insoluble global connections, Xi Jinping made it a positive narrative, a

---

<sup>289</sup> The 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. "Constitution of the Communist Party of China (Adopted on November 14, 2012)," November 16, 2012, accessed February 18, 2021. [http://www.china.org.cn/china/18th\\_cpc\\_congress/2012-11/16/content\\_27138030.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/18th_cpc_congress/2012-11/16/content_27138030.htm)

<sup>290</sup> Li, *China Goes Green*, 6-7.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>292</sup> Jinping, "Address of General Secretary Xi Jinping to the Politburo Standing Committee."

key attribute of the rallying cry of the China Dream.<sup>293</sup> As the future global hegemon, China must embrace the notion of establishing itself as an ecological civilization, a global leader on environmental issues. The assertion that China, a nation that has largely ignored environmental protection in the pursuit of economic progress, can radically alter its present concept of environmentalism to support a theoretical future of global leadership is no small feat. Xi Jinping's political narrative emphasizes that China must first play the part of a global leader before assuming the role. Effectively, national rejuvenation and international hegemony are contingent upon China's assumption of the global image of an ecological civilization.

Domestically, Xi Jinping's ecological civilization manifests itself through stark contradictions. Specifically, the CCP emphasizes the creation of a modern global society focused on environmentalism while simultaneously disenfranchising environmental CSOs and supporting unregulated economic growth. Consequently, these practices expand the authority of the Chinese state while adversely affecting China's environmental record. The Charity and NGO Laws' restrictions, preferential treatment of GONGOs, and government responses to environmental activism guarantee that environmental civil society is perennially bound to the CCPs political narrative. Economic development has been and remains the ultimate objective of the Chinese government and the underlying motivation for Beijing's intensification of environmental efforts is their assessment of the costs and benefits of taking mitigation actions sooner rather than later.<sup>294</sup> The CCPs seemingly contradictory choices—production of toxic and unregulated PX plants, support of ecologically detrimental dams for alternative energy sources, continued position as the top carbon emissions in the world—indicate the economic profitability of China's selective environmentalism. Unfortunately, the reality of Xi Jinping's ecological civilization is

---

<sup>293</sup> Goron, 43.

<sup>294</sup> Stensdal 126.



that environmental discourses that challenge the positive vision of the future are excluded, as well as those implying that a precondition for achieving the ecological transition is a more radical change in the country's political structure.<sup>295</sup> an empowered civil society. Thus, a distinct interpretation of ecological civilization characterized by the Party's authority in enforcing environmental reforms predominates in Chinese policies. The CCP departs from the prevailing policy since the Deng Xiaoping era of "separation of party and state" to assert the supreme power of the party in all critical governance institutions, environmentalism included.<sup>296</sup> By emphasizing the primacy of the party's ideology in Chinese politics, the CCPs distinct interpretation of ecological civilization ironically devalues true environmental efforts in China.

While the contradictions of China's domestic implementation of the ecological civilization inhibit true environmental and political reform, China's international environmental record is significantly more favorable. For example, in the 2014 U.S.-China Climate Pledge, Xi Jinping set targets to peak carbon-dioxide emissions in 2030 and establish clean energy sources or 20 percent of China's total energy production by 2030.<sup>297</sup> China supported both the 2015 and 2017 Paris Climate Accords with even lower carbon dioxide emissions standards, despite the United States' departure from the agreement. Although China declined to lower emissions standards even further at the 2019 Brazil climate accords negotiations, their public proclamations at achieving carbon neutrality by 2020 received widespread international attention. Effectively, China continues to attempt to position itself as a global leader in environmental concerns despite their troubling domestic ecological record. While China has demonstrated an increasing willingness to obey international environmental accords, it is still viewed as being "laggard"

---

<sup>295</sup> Goron, 49.

<sup>296</sup> Li, *China Goes Green*, 21.

<sup>297</sup> Mark Lander, "U.S. and China Reach Climate Accord After Months of Talks," *The New York Times*, November 11, 2014, accessed March 10, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/12/world/asia/china-us-xiobama-apec.html>.

because the domestic concerns of the state have an enormous impact on China's international engagement.<sup>298</sup> Despite troubling domestic issues, China's prioritization of international environmental standards support their fixation on crafting a global image as a progressive leader on environmental concerns.

### **Conclusion**

In prioritizing the creation of an appealing global image as a leader in environmentalism, the CCP uses fabricated environmentalism to serve the Party's larger nationalist aims. The CCPs grandiose claims of constructing an ecological civilization, a lasting testament to the Party's strength, foresight, and overall prestige in Chinese history--further fortifies the positive narrative of the China Dream. Additionally, China's faux environmentalism aligns with CCPs fabricated and selective environmental platform intended to convince the international community that China is diligently toiling to evolve and assume its position as the global hegemon. The future global hegemon must be aware of and sympathetic to the prevailing concerns of the times. While China's selective environmentalism may be minimally effective, it successfully convinces the international community of China's dedication to ecological preservation. Unfortunately, Chinese environmental CSOs, in short, have been caught up in the larger struggle by Xi Jinping's administration to craft a stronger party and a stronger China.<sup>299</sup> The restrictive policies of the NGO and Charity Laws and the CCPs circumvention of the demands of environmental protests indicate that the Party is far from dedicated to true ecological reform. However, the notion of an ecological civilization is optimally effective in both convincing the Chinese public to invest in the glorious—and theoretical—future of the China Dream and misrepresenting the true scope of China's environmentalism to the international community. Undoubtedly, the CCPs theoretical

---

<sup>298</sup> Li, 53.

<sup>299</sup> International Center for Not-for-profit Law.

ecological civilization will be built in time, regardless of China's environmental civil society groups' involvement.

# Chapter 6

## Conclusion

Xi Jinping's tenure at the helm of the CCP has coincided with remarkable economic, social, and political developments in China. Boasting the world's second-largest economy, China will likely soon surpass the United States in economic development and output. Additionally, China's financial leadership in the Asia-Pacific is seemingly secure with the Belt and Road Initiative's steady advance, despite its consistent controversy. The Tiananmen Square-era calls for social and political reform are largely silenced as the spoils of prodigious economic growth are attributed to the efficacy of strict oversight by the CCP. Social relaxations spurred by globalization and the media's proliferation do little to deter mass support for the Party. Politically, a concentrated effort to further legitimize the power of the CCP dominates the Xi Jinping-era's policies. The abolition of term limits for the Party's General Secretary, the fortification of Xi Jinping's allies—and the eradication of his rivals—within the political bureaucracy, and the mobilization of Chinese citizens behind the dream of Chinese rejuvenation fortifies the CCP's position as architects of China's future. With the CCP's authority cemented as the crux of Party-State operations, the CCP can perpetuate its political agenda unencumbered, thus immortalizing it as China's political ethos for decades to come. China's economic, social, and political evolution during the Xi Jinping era is integral to developing the CCP's political vision for China's future.

With this rejuvenated authority, the CCP advocates a political agenda characterized by overt nationalism. This nationalism, specifically, promotes a modern and state-centric constructivist narrative that predicates China's global ambitions upon support for this ideology. China's modern nationalist political narrative focuses on China's degradations and difficulties during its recent past and present reality. The humiliations China suffered at the hands of countless invading political and economic forces—Mongolians during the Qing dynasty, British during the colonial period, Japanese during the first and second world wars—are only secondary to China's current difficulties asserting itself within the international hierarchy against exploitative Western economic forces. During his inaugural address to the National People's Congress in November 2012, Xi Jinping stated that “in the modern era, our nation experienced constant hardships and difficulties.”<sup>300</sup> The influences of modernity—globalization, technology, media, population movement—also detract from China's Socialist foundation. While announcing an anticorruption campaign in 2012, Xi Jinping's initiated a Maoist rectification campaign targeting the evils of the Four Winds (formalism, bureaucracy, hedonism, and waste).<sup>301</sup> Formulated in modernity, the Four Winds spurred a spirit of national rejuvenation, which underlays the CCPs political narrative. To transform from a vulnerable nation to formidable world power, China must renew its loyalty to the Chinese state via the CCPs nationalist ethos. Thus, modernity brings both advancement and adversity to Chinese society. This modern nationalist ideology is the foundation upon which the modern state-centric constructivist nationalism is built.

In addition to ascribing to tenants of modern nationalism, the CCP also perpetuates a state-centric constructivist nationalist ideology. Further legitimized with increased jurisdiction

---

<sup>300</sup> Xi Jinping, “Address of General Secretary Xi Jinping to the Politburo Standing Committee.”

<sup>301</sup> Broadhurst, 99.

over Chinese political and governmental operations, the CCP crafts a nationalist narrative tailored explicitly to its political goals and vision for China's future. This narrative aligns with a common phenomenon, as Bill Hayton writes: “all modern states have gone through this process of ‘invention’: selectively remembering and forgetting aspects of their pasts in order to present an ostensibly and unifying vision for the future.”<sup>302</sup> China's vision for its future requires an intense national rejuvenation founded upon a version of China's history, culture, and political ethos fabricated by Xi Jinping's administration. Only after employing this fabricated nationalism can China achieve domestic stability, advance the “cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics,”<sup>303</sup> and assume its rightful place as the global hegemon. To achieve this goal, the CCP focuses its nationalist narrative on three items: fostering national unity, empowering the CCP, and creating a positive global image. By enforcing unwavering loyalty to these tenants' fulfillment, the CCP empowers a political environment where the CCP's steadfast dedication to these tenants creates a political climate where allegiance to the Party and support for its political agenda is indistinguishable from nationalism. The manufactured nationalism of the CCP facilitates the creation of an artificial Chinese past, present, and future to achieve the China Dream.

To impose national unity for national rejuvenation, the CCP adopts restrictive policies toward Muslim minority groups. Muslim minorities in Xinjiang, specifically, are the recipient of unwelcome attention and unwarranted restrictions from the CCP. Similarly, India's government pursues aggressive discriminatory policies toward Muslims in the Kashmir region. Remote territories with abundant natural resources and insufficient infrastructure, Xinjiang and Kashmir are easily susceptible to abuse by the Chinese and Indian governments, respectively. While

---

<sup>302</sup> Hayton, 3.

<sup>303</sup> Xi Jinping, “Address of General Secretary Xi Jinping to the Politburo Standing Committee.”

India's degradation of Kashmir's legally protected status and China's improper implementation of Xinjiang's Western Development Plan in Xinjiang adversely affect each region's Muslim minority populations, these policies contribute to a larger nationalist effort to rework India and China's histories and reimagine their present into a reality where political empowerment resides only with majority populations. The BJP's prioritization of the Hindu majority and the CCP's Han-centric ideology and renewed appreciation for Confucianism contribute to a fabricated nationalist ethos intended to enforce national unity. These state-manufactured nationalisms promote reverence to the state as superior to religious affiliation. China and India's disregard for their secular and multiethnic histories, enforcement of restrictive policies in autonomous regions, and overt subjugation of Muslim minority populations are small parts of each nation's more significant efforts to foster national unity in support of nation-building. To maintain the stability and harmony deemed essential to China and India's development, Muslim minority groups, unfortunately, suffer immensely.

Like their coercive approach to fomenting national unity, China applies similarly oppressive policies to fortify the central government's authority. Since announcing his first anticorruption rectification campaign in 2012, Xi Jinping has spearheaded bureaucratic reforms to address extremely unpopular and culturally entrenched endemic corruption. The creation of the NSC and local CDIs, implementation of spending restrictions for Party members, and prosecution of corrupt high-level officials all support the CCP's very public campaign to combat corruption in the name of national rejuvenation. These reforms, however, ironically support the pre-existing national culture where corruption is both accepted and rewarded. Under Xi Jinping's leadership, the CCP's creation of a centralized corruption infrastructure, attacks on the Party's rivals, and failure to eradicate traditional *guanxi* networks ensure that domestic corruption will

maintain its current prolific levels. Additionally, without substantial bureaucratic support or adequate, meaningful infrastructure to combat corruption, the CCPs grandiose economic goals supporting the China Dream will likely provide alternative avenues for corrupt practices. China's continually dismal rankings on Transparency International's corruption monitoring platforms indicate that corruption remains an undisputed fact of China's reality. Additionally, the CCPs corruption reforms support a broader nationalist narrative where corruption is interchangeable with defiance of the CCPs authority and political agenda. Effectively, the Xi Jinping era's anticorruption initiatives empower traditional guanxi networks to remain obedient to the CCP and Xi Jinping's distinct vision for China's future.

China's restrictive domestic political environment also supports the CCPs attempts to fabricate a positive global image. As the future global hegemon, China must be sympathetic to contemporary society's concerns, specifically, environmentalism. Despite the strict confines of the Party's limitations for civilian activism, China's environmental CSOs are dynamic, effective, and savvy. Successful environmental CSOs blend Party loyalty with environmental advocacy while supporting noncontroversial issues that advance the environmental, and thus, the Party's, cause. The protests at Nu River, Xiamen, and Maoming indicate the sheer competency and effectiveness of China's environmental civil society. Although the CCP ultimately circumvented these environmental issues and advanced their economic interests through alternative avenues, the protests highlighted in this paper indicate the CCPs willingness take ownership of environmental concerns if they advance their broader nationalist agenda. The CCPs advocacy for creating an ecological civilization affirms the Party's fixation with manufacturing a global image sympathetic to China's needs. Effectively, national rejuvenation and international hegemony are contingent upon China's assumption of the global image of an ecological civilization.



The breadth of the CCPs coercive approaches to nationalism as discussed in this paper—Muslim minority rights, domestic corruption, environmental civil society—indicate that there is undoubtedly a wealth of topics still requiring analysis. The Party’s quest for national unity, centralized authority, and the creation of a positive global image color their approaches to other topics. Although the treatment of Muslim minorities in India and China is a topic commonly discussed by the media, the treatment of other minority groups in India, China, and the global community requires attention. In China, specifically, the CCPs proliferation of the Han race's supremacy leaves countless minority groups outside the scope of political protection. Ethnic Tibetans, Mongols, Kazakhs, and citizens of African descent have all suffered the ramifications of the CCPs nationalist narrative. While the troubling circumstances of minority groups in China are unfortunately not uncommon throughout the global community, China's growing influence within the international community raises questions of its conduct toward minority rights in the future. In addition to assessing the status of minority groups throughout China, China's involvement in corruption in the global marketplace requires additional research. While Xi Jinping's anticorruption campaigns focused on domestic concerns, China's vast economy ensures it will remain a central player in the global economy. The abundant literature discussing Chinese corporate espionage or intellectual property disputes should expand to analyze the prevalence of corruption in Chinese companies operating in the international markets. Additionally, Deng Xiaoping’s market reforms, while frequently analyzed in the context of their implications on Chinese domestic corruption levels, should also be assessed through the scope of their impact on the development of China’s present nationalist ideology. Furthermore, given the CCPs restrictive approach to environmental civil society, similar practices could be evident in additional realms of civil society. The CCPs pervasive influence on nonconfrontational civil society topics—

poverty, child welfare, cultural preservation—is invariably tainted by their coercive tendencies. Finally, the relationship between these topics—minority rights, international corruption, civil society—and nationalism requires analysis. The CCPs long-term global ambitions for China's national rejuvenation ensure that the CCPs current brand of nationalism will continue to color most, if not all, of their future operations.

The CCPs modern state-centric constructivist nationalism is a formidable force in Chinese society. Not only does this nationalism influence China's broader ambitions for global hegemony, but it also biases China's policies regarding Muslim minority rights, domestic corruption, and environmental civil society. While these topics may appear independent, they ultimately connect to provide an essential understanding of nationalism in the Xi Jinping era. The CCPs efforts to enforce national unity, centralize political authority, and create a positive global image are small parts of China's extensive attempts at nation-building. Singularly focused on supporting the China Dream of national rejuvenation, the Party applies its distinct, modern, and manufactured nationalism to every endeavor. The CCPs policies toward Muslim minority populations, domestic corruption, and environmental civil society indicate that national rejuvenation can only be achieved with a nationalism that is Xi Jinping designed, CCP endorsed, and distinctly Chinese.

# Bibliography

## Works Cited

- Alam, Anwar. "Political Management of Islamic Fundamentalism: A View from India." *Ethnicities* 7, no. 1 (2007): 30-60. Accessed March 21, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/23889420](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23889420).
- Anderson, Benedict. "Imagined Communities." In *Nations and Nationalism: A Reader*, edited by Spencer Philip and Wollman Howard, 48-60. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.
- "Asian Intelligence: An Independent Report on Asian Business and Politics." Political and Economic Risk Consultancy, March 28, 2018, accessed October 20, 2020. <http://www.asiarisk.com/subscribe/exsum1.pdf>
- BBC News. "Aung San Suu Kyi's Myanmar dam dilemma with China." July 27, 2019. Accessed March 20, 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48857781>.
- Bhattacharya, Abanti. "Chinese Nationalism and China's Assertive Foreign Policy." *The Journal of East Asian Affairs* 21, no. 1 (2007): 235-62. accessed October 21, 2020, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23258004>.
- Broadhurst, Roderic and Peng Wang. "After the Bo Xilai Trial: Does Corruption Threaten China's Future?" *Survival* 56, no. 3 (June 2014): 157-78.
- Brunner, Elizabeth. "Wild Public Networks and Affective Movements in China: Environmental Activism, Social Media, and Protest in Maoming." *Journal of Communication* 67, no. 5 (October 2017): 665-77. doi:10.1111/jcom.12323.
- Buckley, Chris. "China Takes Aim at Western Ideas." *The New York Times*. August, 19 2013. Accessed March 10, 2021. [https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/20/world/asia/chinas-new-leadership-takes-hard-line-in-secret-memo.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/20/world/asia/chinas-new-leadership-takes-hard-line-in-secret-memo.html?_r=0)
- Callahan, William A. "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 29, no. 2 (2004): 199-218. Accessed May 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40645112>.
- Chen, Jie. "Transnational Environmental Movement: Impacts on the Green Civil Society in China." *Journal of Contemporary China* 19, no. 65 (June 2010): 503-23. Accessed January 26, 2021. doi:10.1080/10670561003666103.
- Chima, Jugdep S. "Ethnic Subnationalist Movements in Contemporary South Asia: An Introduction." *Asian Survey* 49, no. 6 (2009): 915-23. Accessed March 15, 2020. doi:10.1525/as.2009.49.6.915.

China File. "Document 9: A ChinaFile Translation." November 8, 2013. Accessed March 10, 2021. <https://www.chinafile.com/document-9-chinafile-translation>

Cooper, Andrew F., and Asif B. Farooq. "The Advocacy of Democratic Governance by India and China: Patterns of Consistency/Inconsistency between Declaratory and Operational Practices." *India Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (2015): 221-38. Accessed February 24, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/45072755](http://www.jstor.org/stable/45072755).

Deal, Jacqueline Newmyer. "China's Nationalist Heritage." *The National Interest*, no. 123 (2013): 44-53. Accessed May 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42896536>.

Denyver, Simon. "China sets up new foreign aid agency to better project influence abroad." *The Washington Post*. March 13, 2018. Accessed March 20, 2021. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/china-promotes-foreign-aid-bolsters-environment-ministry-in-government-shake-up/2018/03/13/d3c26d94-267a-11e8-ab19-06a445a08c94\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/china-promotes-foreign-aid-bolsters-environment-ministry-in-government-shake-up/2018/03/13/d3c26d94-267a-11e8-ab19-06a445a08c94_story.html)

Dreyer, June Teufel. "China's Vulnerability to Minority Separatism." *Asian Affairs* 32, no. 2 (2005): 69-85. Accessed March 25, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/30172869](http://www.jstor.org/stable/30172869).

Economy, Elizabeth C. "The Great Leap Backward? The Costs of China's Environmental Crisis." *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 5 (2007): 38-59. Accessed March 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20032433>.

Economy, Elizabeth C. "The Challenge of Greening China." In *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*, 95-134. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2010. Accessed April 4, 2021. doi:10.7591/j.ctt7z8gj.8.

Economy, Elizabeth C. "The New Politics of the Environment." In *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*, 135-82. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2010. Accessed March 10, 2021. doi:10.7591/j.ctt7z8gj.9.

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. "Nationalism." In *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, 117-46. London; New York, NY: Pluto Press, 2010. Accessed May 6, 2020. doi:10.2307/j.ctt183h0h1.12.

Esteban, Mario. "The Management of Nationalism during the Jiang Era (1994-2002) and its Implications on Government and Regime legitimacy." *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 5, no. 2 (2006): 181-214.

Fewsmith, Joseph. "China's Uncertain Future Under an All-Powerful Xi Jinping: An Interview with Prof. Joseph Fewsmith." *Harvard International Review* 40, no. 1 (2019): 42-44. Accessed October 4, 2020. doi:10.2307/26617393.

Fewsmith, Joseph. "Xi Jinping's Fast Start." *China Leadership Monitor*, no. 41 (Spring 2013):

- 1-7. Accessed October 9, 2020.  
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=asn&AN=91025653&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Garrick, John and Yan Chang Bennett. "Xi Jinping Thought": Realisation of the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation?" *China Perspectives*, no. 1-2 (113) (2018): 99-106. Accessed October 4, 2020. doi:10.2307/26531916.
- Gellner, Ernest. "Nationalisms and the New World Order." *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 47(5): 29-36.
- Gladney, Dru C. "Islam in China: Accommodation or Separatism?" *The China Quarterly*, no. 174 (2003): 451-67. Accessed March 25, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/20059003](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20059003).
- Goron, Coraline. "Ecological Civilisation and the Political Limits of a Chinese Concept of Sustainability." *China Perspectives*, no. 4 (115) (2018): 39-52. Accessed February 20, 2021. doi:10.2307/26598245.
- Groot, Gerry. "Internment and Indoctrination--Xi's 'New Era' in Xinjiang." In *Power*, edited by Golley Jane, Jaivin Linda, Farrelly Paul J., and Strange Sharon, Acton ACT, Australia: ANU Press, 2019: 98-112. Accessed March 25, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvfrxqkv.14](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvfrxqkv.14).
- Gueorguiev, Dimitar. "Dictator's Shadow: Chinese Elite Politics Under Xi Jinping." *China Perspectives*, no. 1-2 (113) (2018): 17-26. Accessed October 4, 2020. doi:10.2307/26531908.
- Guo, Yong. "Corruption in Transitional China: An Empirical Analysis." *The China Quarterly*, no. 194 (2008): 349-64. Accessed April 15, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/20192201](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20192201).
- Hao, Tang. "Xiamen PX: A Turning Point?" *China Dialogue*. January 16, 2008. Accessed February 20, 2021. <https://chinadialogue.net/en/pollution/1626-xiamen-px-a-turning-point/>.
- Hao, Yufan and Michael Johnston, "Corruption and the future of economic reform in China." In *Political Corruption: Concepts and Contexts*, edited by Arnold J. Heidenheimer and Michael Johnston, 583-604. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2009.
- Harris, Erika. "A Multinational Condition and the Rights of Minorities." In *Nationalism: Theories and Cases*, 75-97. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.
- Harris, Erika. "Theories of Nations and Nationalism." In *Nationalism: Theories and Cases*, 46-72. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.
- Hasmath, Reza. "Managing China's Muslim Minorities: Migration, Labor, and the Rise of Ethnoreligious Consciousness Among Uighurs in Urban Xinjiang." In *Religion and the*

- State: A Comparative Sociology*, edited by Jack Barbalet, Adam Possamai, and Bryan S. Turner. London; New York; Delhi: Anthem Press, 2011: 121-38. Accessed March 25, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1wn0r14.11](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1wn0r14.11).
- Hayton, Bill. *The Invention of China*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020.
- Heberer, Thomas. "China in 2014: Creating a New Power and Security Architecture in Domestic and Foreign Policies." *Asian Survey* 55, no. 1 (2015): 82-102. Accessed October 4, 2020. doi:10.1525/as.2015.55.1.82.
- Ho, Peter. "Greening Without Conflict? Environmentalism, NGOs and Civil Society in China." *Development & Change* 32, no. 5 (November 2001): 893-921. Accessed January 16, 2021. doi:10.1111/1467-7660.00231.
- International Center for Not-For-Profit Law. "Civic Freedom Monitor: China." January 14, 2021. Accessed January 26, 2021. <https://www.icnl.org/resources/civic-freedom-monitor/china>
- Israeli, Raphael. "The Muslim Minority in the People's Republic of China." *Asian Survey* 21, no. 8 (1981): 901-19. Accessed March 25, 2020. doi:10.2307/2643890.
- Jeong, Jihyeon. "Ethnic Minorities in China's Western Development Plan." *Journal of International and Area Studies* 22, no. 1 (2015): 1-18. Accessed March 25, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/43490277](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43490277).
- Jha, Nalini Kant. "Dynamics of India's Security and Foreign Policy: Responding to Challenges of South Asian Domestic Milieu." *India Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (2005): 39-70. Accessed March 15, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/45073360](http://www.jstor.org/stable/45073360).
- Jianping, Wang. "Unity in Diversity: The Islamic Revival Movement in China Today." In *Religion in China: Major Concepts and Minority Positions*, edited by Deeg Max and Scheid Bernhard, 143-86. Wien: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2015. Accessed March 25, 2020. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1vw0pdc.13.
- Jinping, Xi. "Address of General Secretary Xi Jinping to the Politburo Standing Committee." 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. November 15, 2012. Accessed October 9, 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-20338586>
- Jinping, Xi. "Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era." 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. Beijing, China: October 18, 2017. Accessed March 20, 2020. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/download/Xi\\_Jinping's\\_report\\_at\\_19th\\_CPC\\_National\\_Congress.pdf](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/download/Xi_Jinping's_report_at_19th_CPC_National_Congress.pdf)
- Jinping, Xi. "Xi Jinping's Speech in Commemoration of the 2,565<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Confucius"

- Birth,” Qufu, China: September 24, 2014. Accessed May 5, 2021.  
<http://library.chinausfocus.com/article-1534.html>
- Jintao, Hu. “Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all.” 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. October 15, 2007. Accessed February 16, 2021. <http://www.china.org.cn/english/congress/229611.htm>
- Ian Johnson. *The Souls of China: The Return to Religion after Mao*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2017.
- Kamat, Sangeeta, and Biju Mathew. "Mapping Political Violence in a Globalized World: The Case of Hindu Nationalism." *Social Justice* 30, no. 3 (93) (2003): 4-16. Accessed March 22, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/29768205](http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768205).
- Keliher, Macabe and Hsinchao Wu. "Corruption, Anticorruption, and the Transformation of Political Culture in Contemporary China." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 1 (2016): 5-18. Accessed October 21, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24738508>.
- Ko, Kilkon, and Cuifen Weng. "Structural Changes in Chinese Corruption." *The China Quarterly*, no. 211 (2012): 718-40. Accessed April 15, 2020.  
[www.jstor.org/stable/23509511](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23509511).
- Kundra, Nakul. "Understanding Nation and Nationalism." *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 21, no. 2 (2019): 125-149. Accessed May 2, 2021. [muse.jhu.edu/article/729520](http://muse.jhu.edu/article/729520).
- Lal, Rollie. "Islam in India." In *The Muslim World After 9/11*, by Angel M. Rabasa, Cheryl Bernard, Peter Chalk, Christine C. Fair, Theodore Karasik, Rollie Lal, Ian Lesser, and David Thaler, 297-320. RAND Corporation, 2004. Accessed March 21, 2020.  
[www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg246af.16](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg246af.16).
- Lander, Mark. “U.S. and China Reach Climate Accord After Months of Talks.” *The New York Times*. November 11, 2014. Accessed March 10, 2021.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/12/world/asia/china-us-xi-obama-apec.html>
- Lee, Kingsyhon and Ming-Sho Ho. "The Maoming Anti-PX Protest of 2014: An Environmental Movement in Contemporary China,." *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (99) (2014): 33-39. Accessed February 9, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24055634>.
- Li, Shaomin. “Assessment of and Outlook on China’s Corruption and Anticorruption= Campaigns: Stagnation in the Authoritarian Trap.” *Modern China Studies* 24, no. 2 (July 2017): 139–57. Accessed October 20, 2020.  
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=123766305&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Li, Xiaofan. "Environmental Concerns in China: Problems, Policies, and Global Implications.”

- International Social Science Review* 81, no. 1/2 (2006): 43-57. Accessed January 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41887258>.
- Li, Yifei and Judith Shapiro. *China Goes Green: Coercive Environmentalism for a Troubled Planet*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 2020.
- Ling, Bonny, Wing Lam, Elisabeth Wickeri, and Tina Tan. "China's Civil Society: Controls, Limits and Role in a "Harmonious Society." *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (71) (2007): 118-25. Accessed January 23, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24053286>.
- Ling, Li. Politics of Anticorruption in China: Paradigm Change of the Party's Disciplinary Regime 2012-2017. *Journal of Contemporary China* 28, no. 115 (2019): 47-63.
- Liu, Jianguo, and Jared Diamond. "Revolutionizing China's Environmental Protection." *Science* 319, no. 5859 (2008): 37-38.
- Manion, Melanie. "An Explosion of Corruption in Mainland China." *Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press (2004): 84-118. Accessed April 15, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvk12s0m.6](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvk12s0m.6).
- Maohong, Bao. "Environmental NGOs in Transforming China." *Nature and Culture* 4, no. 1, 2009: 1-16. Accessed January 8, 2021. [www.jstor.org/stable/43304125](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43304125).
- Marinelli, Maurizio. 2018. "How to Build a 'Beautiful China' in the Anthropocene. The Political Discourse and the Intellectual Debate on Ecological Civilization." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 23 (3): 365–86. Accessed February 15, 2021. doi:10.1007/s11366-018-9538-7.
- Matsuzawa, Setsuko. "Citizen Environmental Activism in China: Legacy, Alliances, and Rights-based Discourses." *ASIANetwork Exchange* 19 (2): 81-91. Accessed February 15, 2021. doi: 10.16995/ane.33
- Meng, Li. "Ecological Civilization Spearheads High-Quality Development in China." *China Today* 68 (8): 43–45.
- Misra, Amalendu. "Hindu Nationalism and Muslim Minority Rights in India." *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 7, no. 1 (2000): 1-18. Accessed March 21, 2020, [www.jstor.org/stable/24675146](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24675146).
- Nayak, Arun Kumar. "Democracy and Development in India: An Investigation." *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues* 18, no. 4 (2014): 40-69. Accessed February 25, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/48505121](http://www.jstor.org/stable/48505121).
- Narang, A.S. "Ethnic Conflicts and Minority Rights." *Economic and Political Weekly* 37, no. 27 (2002): 2696. Accessed May 6, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/4412319](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4412319).



- Postiglione, Gerald. "National Minorities and Nationalities Policy in China." In *The National Question: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Self-Determination in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Berberoglu Berch. Temple University Press, 1995: 259-79. Accessed April 5, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt14bstd1.15](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt14bstd1.15).
- Pye, Lucian W. "Factions and the Politics of Guanxi: Paradoxes in Chinese Administrative and Political Behaviour." *The China Journal*, no. 34 (1995): 35-53. Accessed October 5, 2020. doi:10.2307/2950132.
- Ramay, Shakeel Ahmad. *Eco-Civilization: The Chinese Vision of Prosperity*. Report. Sustainable Development Policy Institute, 2020. 9-14. Accessed January 26, 2021. doi:10.2307/resrep25826.8.
- Roux, Christophe. "Forty years later. Eugen Weber's contribution to an empirical approach of European state-led nation building." *National Identities* 21, no. 1 (2019): 1-20.
- Sajjad, Muhammad Waqas. "Examining the State of Muslim Minority under Modi's BJP since 2014." *Strategic Studies* 38, no. 4 (2018): 19-36. Accessed March 22, 2020. doi:10.2307/48544275.
- Sathyamurthy, T. V. "Indian Nationalism: State of the Debate." *Economic and Political Weekly* 32, no. 14 (1997): 715-21. Accessed May 6, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4405259>.
- Sautman, Barry. "Paved with Good Intentions: Proposals to Curb Minority Rights and Their Consequences for China." *Modern China* 38, no. 1 (2012): 10-39. Accessed April 5, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/23216933](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23216933).
- Schwartz, Jonathan. "Environmental NGOs in China: Roles and Limits." *Pacific Affairs* 77, no. 1 (2004): 28-49. Accessed January 16, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40022273>.
- Sinha, Manoj Kumar. "Minority Rights: A Case Study of India." *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 12, no. 4 (2005): 355-74. Accessed March 22, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/24675308](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24675308).
- Smith, Anthony D. "Culture, Community and Territory: The Politics of Ethnicity and Nationalism." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 72, no. 3 (1996): 445-58.
- Stalley, Phillip, and Dongning Yang. "An Emerging Environmental Movement in China?" *The China Quarterly*, no. 186 (2006): 333-56. Accessed January 23, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20192616>.
- Steinhardt, H. Christoph, and Fengshi Wu. "In the Name of the Public: Environmental Protest and the Changing Landscape of Popular Contention in China." *China Journal* 75, no. 1 (January 2016): 61-82. Accessed January 23, 2021. doi:10.1086/684010.

- Stern, Rachel E. "The Political Logic of China's New Environmental Courts." *China Journal*, no. 72 (July 2014): 53–74. Accessed January 16, 2021. doi:10.1086/677051.
- Sun, Yan and Baishun Yuan. "Does Xi Jinping's Anticorruption Campaign Improve Regime Legitimacy?" *Modern China Studies* 24, no. 2 (July 2017): 14–34. Accessed March 15, 2020. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=123766301&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Tamir, Yael. "Not So Civic: Is there a Difference between Ethnic and Civic Nationalism?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 22: 419-434. Accessed May 2, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-022018-024059>
- Teltumbde, Anand. "Gujarat 2002 and Modi's Misdeeds." *Economic and Political Weekly* 47, no. 11 (2012): 10-11. Accessed March 22, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/23214644](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23214644).
- "Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2018." Report. Transparency International, 2018: 1-16. Accessed February 10, 2020. <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2018/index/dnk>
- "Transparency International Corruption Perception Index 2019." Report. Transparency International, 2019: 1-34. Accessed February 10, 2020, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2019/index/nzl#>.
- Tremblay, Reeta Chowdhari. "Kashmir's Secessionist Movement Resurfaces: Ethnic Identity, Community Competition, and the State." *Asian Survey* 49, no. 6 (2009): 924-50. Accessed March 21, 2020. doi:10.1525/as.2009.49.6.924.
- United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. "Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reviews the report of China." Last modified August 13, 2018. Accessed March 15, 2020. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23452&LangID=E>.
- United Nations News. "'Enhance Solidarity' to fight COVID-19, Chinese President urges, also pledges carbon neutrality by 2060." September 22, 2020. Accessed December 2, 2020. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/09/1073052>
- Van Wie Davis, Elizabeth. "Uyghur Muslim Ethnic Separatism in Xinjiang, China." *Asian Affairs* 35, no. 1 (2008): 15-29. Accessed March 25, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/27821503](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27821503).
- Wang, Peng. "Extra-Legal Protection in China: How Guanxi Distorts China's Legal System and Facilitates the Rise of Unlawful Protectors." *The British Journal of Criminology* 54, no. 5 (2014): 809-30.
- Wang, Qian. "China's Environmental Civilian Activism," *Science* 328, no. 5980 (2010): 824.

Accessed February 5, 2021. DOI: 10.1126/science.328.5980.824-a.

Weber, Eugen. *Peasants into Frenchman*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.

Wedeman, Andrew. "Corruption and Politics." *China Review* (1996): 61-94. Accessed April 16, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/23453140](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23453140).

Wedeman, Andrew. "Great Disorder under Heaven: Endemic Corruption and Rapid Growth in Contemporary China." *China Review* 4, no. 2 (2004): 1-32. Accessed April 16, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/23461882](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23461882).

Wedeman, Andrew. "The Intensification of Corruption in China." *The China Quarterly*, no. 180 (2004): 895-921. Accessed April 16, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/20192410](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20192410).

Wedeman, Andrew. "Xi Jinping's Tiger Hunt: Anti-Corruption Campaign or Factional Purge?" *Modern China Studies* 24, no. 2 (July 2017): 35-94.

Wu, Guoguang. "From Post-Imperial to Late Communist Nationalism: Historical Change in Chinese Nationalism from May Fourth to the 1990s." *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (2008): 467-82. Accessed May 1, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20455052>.

Xinhua News Agency. "CCDI Adopts Communiqué at Plenary Session." January 13, 2019. Accessed November 20, 2020. [www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201901/13/WS5c3b1b31a3106c65c34e41c3.html](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201901/13/WS5c3b1b31a3106c65c34e41c3.html)

Wilson, Scott. "Mixed Verdict on Chinese Environmental Public Interest Lawsuits." *The Diplomat*. July 20, 2015. Accessed February 12, 2021. <https://thediplomat.com/2015/07/mixed-verdict-on-chinese-environmental-public-interest-lawsuits/>

Win, Luo. "More than 800,000 social organizations in China." *People's Daily*. January 7, 2019. Accessed on February 20, 2021. [http://www.cssn.cn/shtt/201901/t20190107\\_4806979.shtml](http://www.cssn.cn/shtt/201901/t20190107_4806979.shtml)

Wong, Edward. "Outrage Grows Over Air Pollution and China's Response." *The New York Times*. December 6, 2011. Accessed 12 March 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/07/world/asia/beijing-journal-anger-grows-over-air-pollution-in-china.html>

Xie, Lei, and Hein-Anton Van Der Heijden. "Environmental Movements and Political Opportunities: The Case of China." *Social Movement Studies* 9, no. 1 (January 2010): 51-68. Accessed on February 11, 2021. doi:10.1080/14742830903442527.

Xinhua News Agency. "Communiqué of 5th Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee Released," October 29, 2020, accessed November 20, 2020. [https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202010/29/WS5f9a8f79a31024ad0ba81f81\\_3.html](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202010/29/WS5f9a8f79a31024ad0ba81f81_3.html)

- Xinhua News Agency. "Full text of President Xi's speech at opening of Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation." May 14, 2017. Accessed December 2, 2020. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-05/14/c\\_136282982.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-05/14/c_136282982.htm)
- Xinhua News Agency. "Full text of resolution on amendment to CPC Constitution." October 24, 2017. Accessed on March 19, 2021. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/24/c\\_136702726.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/24/c_136702726.htm).
- Xinhua News Agency. "Xi Jinping Delivered an Important Speech at the Third Plenary Session of the 19th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection." January 11, 2019. Accessed November 20, 2020. [http://www.ccdi.gov.cn/toutiao/201901/t20190111\\_186902.html](http://www.ccdi.gov.cn/toutiao/201901/t20190111_186902.html).
- Yang, Guobin. "Environmental NGOs and Institutional Dynamics in China." *The China Quarterly* no. 181 (2005): 46-66. Accessed February 9, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20192443>.
- Yuen, Samson. "Friend or Foe? The Diminishing Space of China's Civil Society." *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (103) (2015): 51-56. Accessed January 26, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44090380>.
- Zeng, Ka and Joshua Eastin. "Environmental Pollution and Regulation in China." In *Greening China: The Benefits of Trade and Foreign Direct Investment*, 37-62. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011. Accessed January 26, 2021. doi:10.2307/j.ctvc5pf20.6.
- Zubrzycki, Genevieve. "The Classical Opposition Between Civic and Ethnic Models of Nationhood: Ideology, Empirical Reality and Social Scientific Analysis." *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 139 (2002): 275-95. Accessed May 2, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41274824>.